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## The Times Literary Supplement

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Douglas Swain's "Air Paint Can", 1985, is on exhibition in his one-man touring show *Painting into Air*, which earlier this year could be seen at Artale Gallery, Bath, Glynn Vivian Gallery, Swansea and Quinton/Green Fine Art, London; from August 19 to September 13 it can be seen at the Northern Centre for Contemporary Art, Sunderland, from September 20 to October 18 at the Spacex Gallery, Exeter, from January 10 to February 7 at the Oriol Gallery, Cardiff, and from February 14 to March 11 at Artspace, Aberdeen.

## The combustible Victorians

Richard Jenkyns

PETER GAY

*The Bourgeois Experience: From Victoria to Freud*  
Volume Two: *The Tender Passion*  
490pp. Oxford University Press. £19.50.  
019 5037413

Those influenced by Freud may be crudely divided into the Religious and the Vulgar. Most of us fall at least into the latter group; these days perhaps not many fall into the former, at least in Britain. (The case is different in America, where the old pieties have survived better.) But among the devout there are now various parties, Fundamentalists, Progressive Evangelicals and outright Liberals. Peter Gay falls somewhere in one of the latter two camps. Freud is of course the way and the truth; but he is not inerrant: we may shake our heads over his "rather mechanical anti-Americanism", we may cheekily nickname him "the arch-bourgeois", we may even allow that he "misread the evidence about the prudery of bourgeois culture and its baneful consequences". This last seems to me a more damaging concession than Professor Gay realizes: Freud's patients were almost all bourgeois, his chosen subject was their sexual lives; if he misunderstood the nature of sexual reticence in their culture - which was also his culture - he made a pretty basic mistake. At all events, Gay's position in *The Bourgeois Experience* is flexible enough for agnostics and infidels to be able to appreciate his arguments. There is one lapse in this second volume, when a harmless sentence in *The Florist's Guide*, by the gardening writer Thomas Bridgeman, is revealed to be about impotence and castration. For the most part, though, Gay deploys Freud firmly but without excesses.

While the first volume, *Education of the Senses*, dealt with sex, *The Tender Passion* is about bourgeois notions of love; the reader finds without surprise that the boundaries between the two subjects are not easily drawn, and in practice much of the new volume is concerned with sexual attitudes and behaviour. The conventional picture of the Victorians presents an embarrassment for the Freudian: if they were really so repressed, they should have been emotional cripples, incapable of action, whereas in fact they penned immense novels, drove railway lines through mountain ranges, painted the map red, and so on. Gay's answer is that the Victorians were not really so repressed after all; at least, that is his answer most of the time. "It is a central point of this volume", he writes at the start, "... that it would be a gross misreading of the bourgeois experience to think that nineteenth-century bourgeois did not know, or did not practice, or did not enjoy what they did not discuss." And later he remarks that "while it was a time of silences, evasions and indirections, they were indirections sufficiently blunt to find directions out". There seem to be two slightly but significantly different claims here. The first is that through reticence or respect for privacy or politeness the Victorians did not speak - or if they spoke, did not write - about certain things which they understood perfectly well. That has little to do with prudery, and is something which earlier centuries would have appreciated instinctively. Students of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries sometimes mistake for prudishness what is in fact a concern for civility. The second claim is that there were indeed fears, shames and embarrassments; but that through various furtive, half-hidden channels, these emotions, whether conscious or unconscious, found means of expression.

Gay does not always keep these two claims clearly separate. Perhaps he is justified in this, since the boundaries between them were blurred in actual life. If we try out on his book the "deep archaeology" which he praises for applying to the study of individual human beings, we may suspect that his "central point" overlays an earlier, more conventional belief in Victorian repression. The titles of two of the six principal chapters seem to suggest as much: "Stratagems of Sensuality" and "The Price of Repression". And indeed the argument of these chapters does appear to fluctuate between praise of the Victorians for

the variety and ingenuity of their erotic metaphors and on the other hand a picture of secret desires forcing their way through hidden passages, as when he claims that philanthropic zeal for reforming prostitutes was in reality the expression of erotic needs. This wavering is not necessarily a weakness; it may even be a strength; for it suggests the complexity, obscurity and diversity of human experience. Gay might not himself agree about the obscurity, since it is a claim of the psychoanalytic historian that he can penetrate the arcana of the human mind, but the diversity is something on which he often and rightly insists. The nineteenth century, he says, "swarms with exceptions".

It is certainly true that some of what moderns have taken for prudery was just good manners; that need not imply that the Victorians were wise in their notions of what good manners required. (We should also be aware that at first the Victorians did not even have the vocabulary for certain matters: Gladstone, for example, discusses homosexuality openly in his *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age*, but has to use cumbersome periphrasis. Indeed, the nineteenth century invented the terms

because they are so ordinary: here is a decent, pious couple whose sensuality is candid, straightforward and chaste. "How many letters like the Rooses", Gay asks, "lie buried in attics and archives, or were destroyed by shocked and protective heirs?" And one might add: how many couples were never parted long enough to need to commit their passion to paper? Of course, one cannot know the answer, and perhaps Gay's witnesses were not quite typical, but his conclusion is surely justified: "Merely to quote these couples is to subvert the Victorians' reputation for prissiness and prudery."

An obvious danger of Freudian interpretation is that it may prove too much: if the sexual drive is behind almost everything, then to show that some emotion has an erotic content is to show something that is true but trivially true. Gay does not always escape the danger. Take the fairly simple case of the railway train in literature, a subject to which Gay devotes some pages. Possibly the thrill of locomotive power has a sexual basis. But it would surely be astonishing, on any account, if the nineteenth century had not celebrated steam power; are we then to suppose that all descriptions of it are



Charles Hunt's "My Macbeth", 1863; it is taken here from Richard D. Altick's *Paintings from Books: Art and Literature in Britain, 1760-1900* (527pp. Columbus: Ohio State University Press. \$50, 08142 03809), which will be reviewed shortly in the TLS.

homosexuality and lesbianism, a fact which suggests that it actually opened up discussion of those things which it has been supposed to have repressed.) Many of those silences and evasions were inspired by the desire to say nothing which might bring a blush to the cheek of the young person, and in particular of the female young person. (And since we have touched on Popsnappery, we should remember that, as Gay remarks, Popsnap was designed to be an object of ridicule.) The much abused Dr Bowdler, who antedates the Victorian age in any case, took his scissors to Shakespeare so that he could be read in the family circle. It was a civilized notion that families should read the plays together; nor is it obviously absurd to think that adultery, rape, torture and mutilation are unsuitable for children around the hearth. Of course that is not the whole story, since the stern requirement of delicacy which was imposed especially upon women had a repressive force. Still, it is our own age which is exceptional in its unconcern for reticence of word and action, not the Victorians who were exceptional for the opposite. Nor is it even true that Christianity brought a new sense of shame about the body and its desires. In Homer the genitals are *aidolia*, the things of which one feels shame; and until recently shamefastness (it is interesting that the word is now archaic) seemed a basic and natural human emotion.

Gay has two pairs of star witnesses who return triumphantly in the peroration of the whole book, the Kingsleys and the Rooses, couples who wrote to one another both before and after marriage in frank and unembarrassed celebration of sexual love. The first of these pairs is revealing not so much for Charles Kingsley - who seems odder and odder the more we learn about him - as for the readiness of his wife Fanny to join in his erotic hopes and fantasies; without offence or surprise. The American Rooses are even more interesting, just

because they are so ordinary: here is a decent, pious couple whose sensuality is candid, straightforward and chaste. "How many letters like the Rooses", Gay asks, "lie buried in attics and archives, or were destroyed by shocked and protective heirs?" And one might add: how many couples were never parted long enough to need to commit their passion to paper? Of course, one cannot know the answer, and perhaps Gay's witnesses were not quite typical, but his conclusion is surely justified: "Merely to quote these couples is to subvert the Victorians' reputation for prissiness and prudery."

That is a simple example; subtler problems arise in other cases, for example the worship of nature. At first sight Gay seems to have struck a vein of gold: he has plenty of examples of people speaking of virgin nature, of nature as a loving mistress, and so on. But to take such phrases *au pied de la lettre* is to tackle literary language with pretty rough tools. These things are metaphors, and the whole point of metaphor is that it finds comparisons between things naturally unlike: you compare nature to a virgin or a lover precisely because you are so confident that your emotion when you look at a fine landscape is not sexual. Aha, the Freudian may reply, so you suppose; but your subconscious could tell another story! The retort may conceivably be justified, in some cases at least, but the Freudian interpreter should at least be aware of this paradox: that the easier and more overt his evidence seems to be, the less likely it is to favour him upon a closer analysis. In any case, Gay goes astray when he suggests that the triumphs of the natural sciences weakened the old anthropomorphic longings for nature. On the contrary, Ruskin was surely right to argue that the rise of science had increased these longings as a compensation for the hard material facts: the pathetic fallacy was characteristic of modern sentiment. Smokestacks, not sex, lie behind the passion for nature.

Gay tends to treat Christianity as though it had been newly invented in the nineteenth century. When we are told that Mrs Eliza B. Duffey declared a pure marriage to be a "true sacrament", we may reflect that it was not Mrs Eliza B. Duffey who first thought of that one; when Gay writes that Kingsley interpreted the texts "male and female created he them" and "be fruitful and multiply" as "biblical sanctions

for his affirmation of sexuality", one wonders how else he could have understood them. Gay calls the holiness of matrimony a "cliché" and a "triumphant... commonplace"; this is a misleading way to refer to a basic Christian belief. As an example of this cliché he offers Victor Hugo's treatment of the wedding night of Marius and Cosette in *Les Misérables*: the heavens open, an angel guards their room, the house becomes a temple. And yet though such a picture derives from Christian ideas and iconography, it is in a way a degeneration of the Christian conception, which asserts the holiness of the ordinary business of married life, including the ordinary animal facts of it. When Kingsley says that the Bible guarantees the sanctity of human relations, including sexual relations, Gay says that his argument "may appear to be simply self-indulgent and self-interested, a facile proffering of spiritual reasons for doing fleshly things". Similarly, he speaks of the future Mrs Kingsley using "some convenient scriptural passages" as a means of "clearing the way for a career of married sensual enjoyment free of guilt". Here he seems still to be a prisoner of that prejudice against the Victorians from which he is so splendidly eager to liberate us; if they were true to their beliefs, the Victorians should not have been interested in the flesh; if they betray such an interest, they are therefore sliding towards hypocrisy. But this is to misunderstand, as the Victorians did not, the nature of Christian teaching (it is often said that Protestantism exalted the married state while Catholicism exalted asceticism, but even this is a half-truth); it is worth remembering that all those married in the Church of England in the last century heard the preamble to the wedding service in the Book of Common Prayer, which has proved too strong for the delicate sensibilities of the twentieth century.

A chapter on "Problematic Attachments" examines homosexuality. This is a matter on which it is tricky to grasp what the Victorians did and did not know, what they tolerated and what they forbade. One thing can be said at once: any genital expression of homosexuality was regarded by most people in the nineteenth century - and not, of course, in the nineteenth century alone - with violent abhorrence. This hatred is so fierce that it calls for some psychological explanation; we may agree to so much without offering a solution. But having said that, we have then to tread very warily. It is almost inevitable that Wilde's name should be prominent in discussions of this issue, but in some ways it is a pity, since his case is so untypical. In the first place, he brought his ruin upon himself: it was his insistence on suing Queensberry for libel that led to his arrest and trial. Second, the crime for which he was convicted is still on the statute book; I do not know what sentence it would attract now, but until quite recently four years would have been a fair bet. Wilde got two; on one view he was lucky to live when he did. It is misleading of Gay to say that "Wilde, as everyone knows, fell afoul [sic] in 1895 of the English laws for flaunting [his] particular sexual appetites". He had been flaunting his lilies and velvet (not quite the same thing) for years; and if he had not let Queensberry provoke him, he would surely have been left alone. Gay is more persuasive when he points to an irony of the late century; as the subject of homosexuality came out more into the open, public censure increased. At the end of Queen Victoria's reign it was the love that dared not speak its own name; in the mid-century no one else had cared to name it either. And for the most part, when people do not speak of a thing, they do not think about it much. For sexual outlaws this was a protection. Moreover, when the punishment is disproportionate to the offence, people may conspire to keep the truth hidden. We can see the irony repeating itself in more recent times: comparison of Tom Driberg's successful career with Peter Tatchell's travails in Bermondsey suggests that official intolerance has its advantages.

It is the area between sodomy and fervent friendship which is hard to map. At the one extreme was F.W. Farrar (not mentioned by Gay), whose school stories ruval powerful pederastic and sadistic feelings of which he was entirely unaware; at the other end were strong friendships without sexual content but expressed with an exuberance which later anx-



ieties would make unfashionable. In between lay a swamp of damp, sentimental adoration of schoolboys. This seems to have been acceptable (witness the weedy sonnets of Lufroy, anthologized by Quiller-Couch in *The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse*), and surely its nature was well enough understood. Gay likens the cases of C.J. Vaughan, forced to resign as Headmaster of Harrow for fear of exposure, and William Johnson Cory, dismissed from Eton by the Headmaster, Hawtrey: I suspect that they were very different. Vaughan was carrying on a kind of affair with a pupil; he had to go, and a man in his position would fare no better in 1986. Cory's case is very obscure, but there is little doubt that Hawtrey panicked over something perfectly harmless. Gay chides David Newsome for innocently supposing that Cory had allowed his emotions to be misunderstood; on the contrary, he suggests, they had been understood too well. One might reply that it is rash to accuse a public-school headmaster (for such Dr Newsome is) of innocence in these matters. Probably the nature and limits of Cory's feelings had been understood and tolerated, and Hawtrey lost a teacher of genius through funk.

Gay writes discursively. At best, the book conveys the air of highly intelligent conversation, but the writing can be slack or repetitive (has he used a dictaphone?) Sometimes one piece of evidence is bunged in after another with little thought: for example, Amiel writes that a man cannot marry without an income to support his wife; we are then told that "much like Amiel" Karl von Holtei found that the persons for whom he felt a sentimental adoration were different from those he lusted after. It would be hard to think of two ideas more unlike. And there are mistakes. Hume's statement that our passions are the only causes of our labour is taken to be "an appreciation of the elemental passions" whereas it is a philosophical point about the nature of appetite. Gay supposes Pater's essay on Winckelmann to contrast the serenity and wholeness of ancient Greek culture with the philistinism of his own age. In fact Pater's contrast is almost the reverse of this: between the simplicity of Hellenism and the modern world's complex sophistication. (Incidentally, Gay has, like Pater's first biographer, Thomas Wright, swallowed the claim of the fantasist Richard

Charles Jackson to have been Pater's intimate friend. He was not.) These slips and signs of haste are the effects of a scope and ambition the holdness of which we should admire; but they pose an especial problem in a Freudian work. Like Jeeves, Gay is concerned with the psychology of the individual; but one cannot put much faith in the analysis unless one is confident that the analyst has a nice sense of nuance and an exactness in the handling of detail.

The problem is compounded by the temptation for Freudian analysis to offer a single account of diverse phenomena. Gay stresses the diversity of bourgeois culture; but sometimes the stress has to fight against the reductive tendency of his method. Stendhal's and Thackeray's loves for their mothers were Oedipal in their intensity (Gay's evidence is impressive here); Schopenhauer got on badly with his mother, but that, to be sure, was "longing turned into hatred". Oedipus in reverse. Thackeray's Henry Esmond marries a worldly-wise woman much older than himself, and that is Oedipal; Dickens's David Copperfield marries a very young and silly girl, and so is that. The future Mrs Bagehot's headaches were a psychosomatic weapon in her struggle with her mother. We can tell this because sometimes when mother had a headache, Eliza had one too. We can tell it also because sometimes when mother had a headache, Eliza had none, so that she could usurp her mother's place. Heads I win, tails you lose; but perhaps Eliza simply suffered from migraine, especially since her headaches continued after she was happily married. Time and again Gay's analyses appear merely speculative: possible, but no more plausible than others, and sometimes less so. The analyses abide our question: the value of the book lies above all in the dazzling scope and variety of the evidence that it brings to bear, drawing as it does upon letters and diaries as well as published sources: we meet here a German working man and there a Yankee adulteress; now a Portuguese novelist, now a French moralist, now a New England school-girl. This is a work of great energy and enthusiasm.

"Their defensiveness was a tribute to passion", Gay writes in his last paragraph, "displaying a wry respect for its powers. It invites the paradoxical speculation that the century of

Victoria was at heart more profoundly erotic than ages more casual about their carnal desires and consummations." That is well said. It remains true that the nineteenth century seems to have increased repression in one respect by seeking to wrap young women in a suffocating cocoon of purity and ignorance. This change is perhaps attributable to the new urbanism. When the prosperous classes lived in small communities in the country, the poor were always with them and it was hard for anyone to stay blind to the facts and consequences of sexual licence; the growth of large middle-class communities from which the poor were excluded except as domestic servants made a new protectiveness possible. Jane Austen's letters have an occasional robustness which we would surely not have found in the correspondence of her nieces.

But the young ladies are a special case. For the most part it now seems that the Victorian age was, upon the largest view, an age of liberation, in which the forces of repression were fighting a long rearguard action. Much of the mud flung at the Victorians should have been flung at their fathers. Most of the famous Victorian horror childhoods were in fact Regency childhoods: Dickens, Ruskin, Elizabeth Barrett, As Victorians, these people escaped from the oppressions of their youth and protested against them, but the stories they told have been taken to reflect the society around them in the time of their adult lives. It is as though the Bloomsbury Group were thought to have been fervently religious because Lytton Strachey wrote about Manning and Gordon.

Our own century may or may not have been the century of the common man, but assuredly the nineteenth was the bourgeois century. The paradox of the bourgeois triumph was that in the short run it may have introduced new forms of stuffiness and over-delicacy, but in the longer term it was breaking down walls that had stood firm for centuries. There is thus a powerful tension in the Victorian age, not so much between "candour and reticence", as Gay puts it (for the Victorians were pretty clear what they might and might not say), as between ebullience and repression; and this tension, we may surmise, gave eros an especial power. One cannot read far in the Victorians' writings without recognizing their sense of the high drama

of the moral life. We meet it in religion: how black was sin in those days, how arduous and heroic was virtue. We meet it too in the sexual life: the game was being played for very high stakes, with an earthly paradise or a hell upon earth as the outcome. It is as though sex, like religion, was more exciting then. Some of them felt conscious of what a good time they were having: Gay cites the French physician Auguste Debay, who argued that the better sort derived an intensity of pleasure from sex which was denied to the lower orders; this was in 1848.

To these causes we must add what C. S. Lewis called "the enchantments of unsatisfied desire". Gay's book again illustrates the point. Kingsley's blood bounding and boiling at the recollection of a kiss, Bagehot leaping over the sofa at the thought that his Eliza had accepted him – such everyday ecstasies are surely rare in our own time. There was nothing new to the nineteenth-century in restrictions upon the physical expression of love outside marriage; but the blend of such traditional constraints with new moral intensities and uncertainties was likely to produce a highly combustible mixture.

Something in their circumstances enabled the Victorians to be at the same time prudent and high-minded, reticent and yet extraordinarily uninhibited. We can see this in their art: the visitor who stumbles upon the nineteenth-century section of a French provincial art gallery scarcely knows where to look, and learns as never before how delicately he has been nurtured. The British did not, to be sure, go quite as far as the Latin races; but they went far enough. The modern auction-room bears witness to this: in the last few years it has become clear that if a Victorian picture is suggestive, £50,000 or more is added to the price. In view of what can be bought at the local newsagent these days, this is an extraordinary fact, but a fact it is, and one which tells us much about the Victorians and ourselves. For we see here a kind of envy, a wistful longing for the joys of repression. According to a modern folk-myth, the Victorians were so prudish that they hid the legs of tables and pianos on the grounds of decency. The belief seems to be false, but it has a symbolic force. Fancy being in a state of such continuous erotic excitement that even a table leg would be too much to bear.

missions in slum parishes and the hearty elements of Club Christianity. Nobody yet, as far as I know, however, has posed this question: why did Rugby football appeal to High Churchmen (and Roman Catholics most of all) and hockey and cricket become the particular enthusiasms of the Evangelicals? I suspect it has something to do with close bodily contact, about which Evangelicals might have qualms.

Volume Fourteen of *The Dickens Studies Annual: Essays on Victorian fiction*, edited by Michael Timko, Fred Kaplan and Edward Gulliano (411pp. AMS Press, distributed in the UK by Euronpan. \$39.50, 0 404 18347) contains the following contributions: Edwin M. Eigner: "David Copperfield and the Benevolent Spirit", D. A. Miller: "Secret Subjects, Open Secrets", Murray Baumgarten: "Writing and David Copperfield", Richard Lettis: "The Social sub-text of David Copperfield", Richard Lettis: "Dickens and Art", Joel Brattin: "Dickens' Creation of Bradley Headstone", John Kucich: "Dickens' Fantastic Rhetoric: The semantics of reality in an unreality in *Our Mutual Friend*", Carol Hanbury Mackay: "Surrealism and the Redoubled Self: Fantasy in David Copperfield and Peverell", Michael Greenstein: "Magic Casements and Victorians' Transparencies: Post-Romantic modes of perception", Nancy F. Anderson: "Autobiographical Fantasies of a Female Anti-Feminist: Eliza Lynn Linton as Christopher Kirkland and Theodora Desanges", Karen Chase: "The Modern Family and the Ancient Image in *Romola*", William E. Buckler: "Toward a Poetics of Hardy's Novels: *The Woodlanders*", Roger B. Henkle: "New Work in the Study of Literature and Society: Application for the analysis of nineteenth-century British fiction", and Richard J. Dunn: "Recent Dickens Studies".

## Commitment to containment

Lawrence Freedman

JOO-HONG NAM  
*America's Commitment to South Korea*  
218pp. Cambridge University Press. £22.50.  
0521 26765 X

By the end of the 1940s, the containment of Soviet power in Europe had been accepted as central to United States security interests. But the same was not true in Asia. No serious attempt had been made to prevent a communist take-over in China. But then the North Korean invasion of the South in 1950 triggered an immediate response and led the United States to argue that containment must apply as firmly in Asia as in Europe.

The political circumstances in Europe were far more conducive to containment, however,

than in Asia where, as both the Chinese and Korean situations had demonstrated, political life was more volatile. Régimes with no credentials other than their professed anti-communism were running countries of no great intrinsic interest to the United States. They required support against substantial communist threats that could only be met by commitments of American forces that turned out to be extremely expensive in human, material and political terms.

The impossibility of sustaining an unlimited containment in Asia was cruelly demonstrated in Vietnam. After he became President in 1969, Richard Nixon, with the aid of Henry Kissinger, sought to define the limits. Under the Nixon Doctrine announced in Guam in July 1969, there would be no fundamental reappraisal of alliances, but a more flexible interpretation of American obligations. The

Allies would be expected to do much more to meet their own defence needs and could not rely on the level of American help to which they had become accustomed. At the same time, Nixon and Kissinger sought to exploit the Sino-Soviet dispute and the United States' improved relations with both communist powers, to forge a new balance of power in Asia which would make it easier for US allies to survive while it disengaged.

This is all fully explained by Joo-Hong Nam in his admirable and tightly argued *America's Commitment to South Korea*. He uses Korea as a case study to illustrate the problems these developments caused for the United States' Asian allies. His book provides an excellent survey of post-war security policies from an Asian perspective, and as such is salutary for a European reader used to a somewhat greater constancy of American purpose. The discussion of nuclear deterrence as applied to Korea provides a quite different perspective to the familiar debates over its application in Europe. The author also manages to convey vividly the consequences of dependence for a politically immature country such as South Korea.

In the 1940s the United States made up its Korean policy as it went along. It accepted an arbitrary division of the country without thinking through the long-term implications. It administered its portion of the country in the same spirit, judging Korea to be of peripheral interest and so failing to attend to the specific security problems caused by the desire of the communists in the North for reunification on their terms. The sudden invasion of the South by the North stirred the United States into action. Having beaten back the North from the South it then began to reunify on its terms, only to be pushed back in turn by an anxious China. The result was a country left divided and militarized, with the United States obliged ever since to maintain forces to prevent a recurrence.

The revision of the containment doctrine

stimulated by Vietnam led initially to a qualification of the American commitment under Nixon and to troop cuts. Jimmy Carter came to power pledging to withdraw all American forces. He was eventually persuaded to change his mind, largely on the basis of a fortuitous change in the estimate of the North Korean military threat to the South. The author describes the background to all of this with insight and subtlety. He also explains its impact on Seoul with – not surprisingly – a considerable degree of sympathy for the South's position. The United States had fortified South Korea originally as a bulwark against communism and not as a shining example of liberal democracy at work.

The crisis created in the early 1970s by the Nixon doctrine was used to justify local repression which, in turn, reinforced the argument that Seoul did not deserve United States support. The attempt to create a Korean lobby in Washington with comparable clout to the Israeli lobby was equally counterproductive when it was exposed as being based on unsavoury methods.

Because the political commitment to South Korea has for so long been backed by a military commitment, Joo Hong Nam argues that you cannot sustain the former without a measure of the latter. This is especially so given the North's readiness to wage war and the lack of a Korean alternative to Germany's *Ostpolitik* (despite an effort to get talks started in 1972). He discusses whether the authoritarian nature of the régime makes it difficult to justify the American commitment. The United States has, however, backed similar régimes when its own security interests so dictated. What the author does not really come to grips with is the much more difficult question of whether the United States will see its own security interests as being so bound up with South Korea's, once Korean authoritarianism is no longer consistent with the country's long-term political stability.

## Placing the blame

Wm Roger Louis

MARTIN JONES  
*Failure in Palestine: British and United States policy after the Second World War*  
396pp. Mansell. £27.50.  
07201 1797 6

This is a book rich in anecdote, but one not included is about Lord Inverchapel, the British Ambassador in Washington in 1946, and Harold Bealey, the Foreign Office expert on Palestine. Inverchapel sympathized with the aspirations of the Zionists. At a supper party he asked Bealey to sit opposite him. Bealey thought the Ambassador was merely being polite. "No, no, no", responded Inverchapel in characteristically blunt language: "Sit right across from me. I want to get a good look at the nigger in the woodpile."

Martin Jones believes that Bealey, along with the other members of the Eastern Department, bears grave responsibility for the misconduct of Britain's Palestine policy in the last years of the mandate. *Failure in Palestine*, then, is a book with an indictment. It goes something like this. The mandarins of the Foreign Office, collectively atoning for the injustice done to the Arabs of Palestine by the Balfour Declaration, erroneously believed that a pro-Arab policy might induce the Arab states to follow Britain's lead in solving the Palestine problem. They were misled by the illusion of Arab unity, which did not and does not exist. Had they demonstrated greater determination in sticking to their job of maintaining British control over the territory, and not solicited Arab advice, the partition of Palestine might have been prevented. This is an engaging argument. It does not detract from the value of the book that it happens to be entirely wrong.

The argument would be more persuasive if it were restricted to the pre-1939 period. In view of ministerial vacillation, the permanent officials might have succeeded with a resolute policy. It is useful to see the Palestine question in terms of bureaucratic politics because the essential issues emerge in uncompromised form. The Foreign Office and the Chiefs of Staff favoured an undivided Palestine as a means of preserving British political and military influence throughout the Middle East. The Colonial Office preferred partition as the only practicable solution. Either plan might have mitigated the post-war troubles if it had been followed with persistence and decisiveness, before the Holocaust gave the Zionist movement an irreversible momentum. In the 1930s the British were still in a position to impose a solution. The change of tactics from the idea of partition put forward in 1937, to conciliation of the Arabs in 1939, led, almost inevitably, to disaster. By 1945 it was too late to prevent British withdrawal, as the Prime Minister, C. R. Attlee, saw more clearly than the Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin. Against immense odds Bevin attempted to devise a Palestine solution that would salvage both Britain's strategic position and her damaged prestige. Bevin's solution was to create a binational state guaranteeing political and religious rights

for the Jews. The Jewish "national home" would exist within an essentially Arab country. But Britain could no longer unilaterally impose such a scheme. Only by Anglo-Arab and Anglo-American effort did it stand any chance of success. The Arabs could wreck it by refusing to accept further Jewish refugees, and the Americans could cause havoc by not restraining Zionist support for an independent Jewish state. The critical period was early 1947, when, as Martin Jones accurately observes, Bevin became exasperated with the Arabs as well as the Americans and decided to refer the Palestine question to the United Nations. This was the turning-point. From then on it was merely a matter of time until the British would be forced to evacuate.

The alternative, which this book implicitly favours, would have been to stand firm, using force if necessary to repress Jew and Arab alike. "It would seem that in the Middle East, as with Hitler's Chancellor, concessions made or promises entered into without the sword do not endure." No doubt British rule could have been maintained. But it would have required a military commitment that the British nation would not have tolerated. When they made the decision to quit in September 1947, Attlee, Bevin, and other members of the Cabinet did so with a sense of relief at finally freeing themselves of a thankless task. In response to the military insistence that the strategic position should not be entirely abandoned, Bevin directed his comment to the RAF: "If they want to stay, they'll have to stay up in 'elicopters'."

Why then the United Nations? With the benefit of hindsight, surely there could have been no better recipe for humiliation, despair, and frustration than to have invited the United Nations into the affairs of a British administration? Historians sometimes do not fully take into account the confusion of motives, ambitions, and perceptions in such a situation. Martin Jones has not understood completely Bevin's contradictory impulses. Bevin actually believed that the United Nations could be used to Britain's advantage and that in any case the Zionists would never get enough votes in the General Assembly to endorse the creation of a Jewish state. If ever there was a fatal miscalculation, this was it. But there were other motives. Bevin and Attlee had systematically exhausted all other alternatives. The Zionist solution was unacceptable. The UN was the last hope of defeating the Zionists. Ironically in November 1947 the Zionists themselves twisted the challenge into their greatest triumph. In the meantime the British had ruthlessly begun to cut their losses. Once the decision had been made to evacuate, they did not look back, nor were they swayed by sentiment for either Jew or Arab. The withdrawal from Palestine was a military operation conducted solely with regard to the protection of British lives and property.

This is a good book, meticulously researched and vigorously argued. There are a lamentable number of misprints, and one just as lamentable odd: Bevin attempted to devise a Palestine solution that would salvage both Britain's strategic position and her damaged prestige. Bevin's solution was to create a binational state guaranteeing political and religious rights

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## Pumping moral muscle

David Newsome

NORMAN VANCE  
*The Sins of the Spirits: The ideal of Christian manliness in Victorian literature and religious thought*  
244pp. Cambridge University Press. £22.50.  
0521 303877

This is not the first book by any means to examine the changing concepts of that quintessentially Victorian virtue known as manliness. *The Sins of the Spirits* has, however, two claims to originality. Literature, and novels in particular, are Norman Vance's first concern, and rightly so because this is the medium by which the concept of manliness became most widely popularized. Second, Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes are the major figures, and the analysis of their writings forms over half the book. It is a shrewd, entertaining and scholarly analysis, too, correcting (at least in part) my own thesis, in *Godliness and Good Learning*, now twenty-five years old, that the teaching of Coleridge and Arnold on manliness (essentially moral courage and the quality whereby wisdom is translated into energetic action) is debased by Kingsley and Hughes into the somewhat risible phenomenon known as "Muscular Christianity". In a study which exhibits admirable historical perspective, Dr Vance argues that both Kingsley and Hughes were much more faithful to their respective masters than I had allowed. Nevertheless he confirms the significance of manliness, in the various meanings which it had for the Victorians, as defining the particular dynamism of that age as well as providing a sort of dialectic reflective of the major religious and philosophical controversies of the times.

Nineteenth-century medievalism ("revitalized chivalry", as Vance describes it), Carlyle's "heroic moral activism", F. D. Maurice's teaching on incarnationism and the social gospel, and Coleridge's concept of the "clerisy" and the moral attributes of its members – all contribute to the qualities of the virtue. To this analysis is added the fierce and hearty Teutonicism of Arnold and Kingsley, exhibited in all Kingsley's writings, but in *Hyppatia*, *Westward Ho!* and *Hereward the Wake* most of all. Kingsley's vehement dislike of the Manichean element in both Evangelicals (their view of the world as wholly corrupt and sinful) and Tractarians (their teaching on sanctity and the celibate virtues) led him to eulogize as the deliverers of mankind the sturdy, honest, robust, simple "Esau-like" characters of history – a tough Saxon rebel fighting against the Norman yoke, Elizabeth's sea-dogs defending their Protestant Queen, lustily heterosexual Goths championing the natural human virtues against effeminate Romans and perverted monks: Jacob was the type of the smooth, devout papist or Tractarian; Esau was the good honest salt-of-the-earth, hero figure. Germanic people revered their womenfolk. "If the western Church", Vance writes, "had been administered from Potsdam or Berlin rather than Rome... one might have had the spectacle any time from the fifth century onwards of some flaxen-haired Gothic priest, part-time Chaplain to a warrior-band, frowning at his unruly offspring before pronouncing a blessing on a Sunday dinner of roast beef washed down with mead." There is, of course, more to Kingsley than that, and Vance sees it; but how typical of the author of *Westward Ho!* that he could not resist adding to the *hyppatia* of Sir Richard Grenville's last speech ("I have ended my life as a true soldier...") the statement: "The pulpit of those days had taught

this to him."

Thomas Hughes is a more engaging figure, and his books are more enduringly readable. He was a simpler personality, of much more orderly mind, and the brutal manliness is far less gratuitous. The message of manliness in Christian service, boldly embracing idealistic working-class co-operative causes, inspired both by Arnold and by James Fraser (Hughes's Tutor at Oriel, on whom "Hardy" in *Tom Brown at Oxford* is modelled), is clear-cut and refreshingly free from the polemical religious flavour of so much of Kingsley's work, if a little more suggestive, perhaps, of *noblesse oblige*.

Vance is at his best on his home territory – Kingsley and Hughes (the subject of his Oxford DPhil thesis). The chapters on the origins of manliness and its development into muscular Christianity and athleticism give the impression of being a bit too compressed, as if the author really needed more elbow-room to develop his ideas. Kipling requires, for instance, a chapter of his own. In *Stalky and Co.*, that engaging trio are far from being prigs, and they are certainly not muscular Christians. They are rather exemplars of "sturdily anarchic individualism" and doubtless became better young soldiers in India as a result. Vance's treatment of Buchanan, an admirer of manliness and an ardent patriot, is interesting, too. But Vance overemphasizes the enduring influence of Calvinism on Buchanan and underestimates his remarkably prophetic political acumen.

All parties to the Church, as Vance rightly sees, tried to turn the rising tide of athleticism post-1870, to their advantage. With the Evangelicals, there was the YMCA (a delightful period-piece of 1890 by Frederick Atkins receives brief mention: *Moral Muscles and How to Use It: A Rightly-Used Club with young men*), with the Anglican Catholics, there was the



# Cowardice versus democracy

A. J. Sherman

DANA. OREN  
Joining the Club: A history of Jews and Yale  
440pp. Yale University Press. £30.  
0300033303

"The awkward question of the Jews arises", wrote Harold Nicolson in his diary on July 11, 1930, reporting conversation at a luncheon party that had included Leonard Woolf. Nicolson went on, "I admit that is the snag. Jews are far more interested in international life than are Englishmen, and if we opened up the [diplomatic] service it might be flooded by clever Jews. It was a little difficult to argue this point frankly with Leonard there." This statement, with its perfect mirroring of a perceived dilemma as well as a constrained social atmosphere, could quite conceivably have been written by any member of several Yale University committees charged from about 1900 until the 1960s with regulating admissions to that distinguished university, especially to its undergraduate division, Yale College. The gentlemen of these, as well as of committees on faculty and administrative appointments, reflected in their collective and individual concern for social homogeneity and a pleasant club-like atmosphere, a cherished traditional notion of the university as training-ground for the American managerial elite, rather than for America's intellectual leadership. Jews and other minorities fitted but imperfectly into their vision of either the university or the wider society. Dan A. Oren's meticulous research reveals how the traditional exclusivist conception of Yale University evolved gradually over time, and with what consequences for Jews and other original outsiders.

Although his story begins with Yale's found-

ation in 1701 under Congregational Church auspices, most of Oren's book is devoted to the years after 1900, when the children of Jewish immigrants to the United States, many of whom settled in New Haven and other Connecticut cities, began to knock at the doors of Yale in increasing numbers. Sharing the traditional Jewish passion for higher education, these young men aroused concern lest they collectively undermine the character of Yale: many of them "townies" from New Haven, poor, ambitious, socially awkward, and with a lack of interest in the traditional undergraduate pursuits of ritualized drinking and sports, they were perceived as unassimilable, an "alien and unwashed element" whose numbers from 1923 were to be strictly if informally controlled. Such limitation was accomplished discreetly but effectively, within the overall context of a policy ostensibly dealing with the problem of overcrowding at the university; and it restricted Jews to no more than 10 per cent of the Yale student body until the 1960s. Thus Yale was able successfully to avoid the storm that had greeted President A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard, who in 1922 publicly urged a definite quota on Jewish admissions to his university, and was forced by the resultant outcry to back down. The lesson learned by the Yale administration was that publicity was at all costs to be avoided; it is to the credit of the University archivists that the confidential record of the Admissions Board's wrestling with "the Jewish question" was preserved for future historians.

Oren's study amply records evidence of the human propensity to establish elaborate pecking-orders, reject outsiders as arbitrarily defined, and engage in social warfare ranging from snubs so exquisitely subtle as to verge on the imperceptible to the most deliberately cruel and damaging exclusion. In some of these struggles, Oren points out, Jews themselves

were eager participants, with the earlier arrivals, who tended to be of German origin and wealthy, applauding the exclusion of recent East European immigrants. The formidable Dean Winteritz, who reigned over Yale Medical School from 1920 to 1935, might on rare private occasions acknowledge his own East European Jewish origins; but in public he savaged Jewish medical students, ruthlessly restricted their numbers, avidly sought admission to exclusive clubs and neighbourhoods, and ultimately achieved his social ambition by marrying a prominent Protestant widow, only to suffer the humiliation of seeing the event described in a local newspaper as "Medical Head Crashes Society by Wedding Smart Set Leader". As Jews assimilated within the larger American society, they too partook of Yale's social mores; barred from certain clubs and fraternities, they founded exclusive clubs of their own; established Jewish doctors joined their non-Jewish colleagues in urging restrictions on the number of Jews in medical schools. Rather than protest against pervasive social discrimination, Jewish students frequently practised it against others and among themselves.

Yale faculties were similarly insular and preoccupied with social status and conformism: neither Jews nor practising Catholics were welcomed at Yale College until after the Second World War; refugee scholars fleeing the Third Reich were employed, if at all, in very small numbers and on short-term contracts. The socially heterogeneous war veterans who crowded into Yale after 1945 changed a great deal by their sheer numbers and irreverent attitudes; and by the early 1960s, an altered political climate outside Yale, as well as keen competition between the better state universities and those of the Ivy League, resulted in the rapid erosion of discriminatory employment policies, at least as far as Jewish male

scholars were concerned. At the instigation of the Jewish Chaplain at Yale, Rabbi Richard L. Israel, the redoubtable William Sloane Coffin Jr., Chaplain of the University in the turbulent Vietnam decade, persuaded the then President, A. Whitney Griswold, in 1969 that neither religious nor racial factors should henceforth determine admissions to Yale. This started a process of change which ultimately included broadening the admissions staff, and an explicit commitment to intellectual merit as the principal criterion for admission.

At present, when Jews number some 30 per cent of the students at Yale, and are represented at every level of the "meritocratic oligarchy" that rules the university, no individual need jettison his religious or ethnic identity to participate fully in its life. The struggle to balance social separation and integration has largely passed to other, increasingly vocal minorities; women, blacks, homosexuals, Asians, have all registered feelings of alienation, and demands for redress of past discrimination. A now ethnically diverse Yale administration has met these demands with sensitivity and an official commitment to equal opportunity in all phases of the University's life.

Judicious in tone, balanced and fluently written, Oren's book will inevitably appeal most to those who already know the university he describes; others may well lose themselves in the institutional and personal minutiae he has so indefatigably quarried from the Yale archives. But this description of snobbery, prejudice, moral cowardice and hypocrisy, as well as courage, generosity and devotion to democratic ideals, deserves a wider readership, which can discern in the social history of Yale University the elements of a larger truth: that institutions as well as individuals open themselves to new possibilities, transcend their limitations, and grow in understanding.



"Ready for Sabbath Eve in a Coal Cellar", 1895, one of Jacob Rills' photographs recording immigrant life in New York at the turn of the century, is reproduced here from Jacob A. Rills: Photographer and citizen by Alexander Alland Sr (220pp. Gordon Fraser, 0912334665).

greatest personal trauma: illness and death. Many *landmanshaftn* provided rudimentary medical insurance to their members; most maintained cemeteries and provided assistance with burial costs. In the midst of the rapidly changing, materialistic world of industrial America, the *landslelt* clung to the simple, even primitive concerns of their peasant past, viewing life in elemental terms and remaining on the margins of the larger society.

But if the creation and survival of the *landmanshaftn* does much to support the argument that rapid and successful assimilation was not always the characteristic experience of immigrants, the demise of the societies adds support to opposing arguments. Few *landmanshaftn* endured beyond the lifespans of first-generation immigrants. Children and grandchildren rejected the exclusivity and isolation, the Old World outlook, of the organizations and planned to assimilate into the American mainstream. And by the end of the Second World War, few such people remained. In the ensuing years all but a few *landmanshaftn* disappeared.

Michael Weisser, a scholar of third modern

Europe, apparently came to this subject out of personal experiences. A *Brotherhood of Memory* is, he concedes, the result of an unusual methodology - what he calls *bubble mayse* history, "history as recounted by our grandparents". It reflects both the strengths and the weaknesses of its genre. It is a series of anecdotes and scattered case studies; it jumps about in time and place seemingly randomly and presents its central points with frustrating repetition; it reads, at times, much like the discursive *bubble mayse* stories from which it is largely drawn. At the same time, however, Weisser has managed to weave together, out of scattered, fragmentary sources, an impressively rich picture of an almost forgotten feature of Jewish immigrant life. And he has used the *landmanshaftn* to suggest the complexity and diversity of the Jewish immigrant experience in America: the vision of communities (and families) between those who assimilated and advanced, and those who did not; between those who became successful, middle-class Americans, and those who remained "marginal, socially and economically in the

# One man's kingdom

Kenelm Burridge

E. M. WEBSTER  
The Moon Man: A biography of Nikolai Miklouho-Maclay  
421pp. University of California Press. £29.75.  
0520054350

Although Nikolai Nikolaevich Miklouho-Maclay (1846-88), the Russian explorer and scientist, is not as widely known as he might be, he is not a forgotten figure. Five hefty volumes on his life and work were produced by the Russians in the 1950s, and there are more than thirty smaller pieces in Russian, French and English, as well as E. S. Thomassen's *Biographical Sketch* (1881), written under Miklouho-Maclay's supervision, Frank Greenop's biography (*Who Travels Alone*, 1944) and C. L. Sentinella's translation of his diaries (1975). Now we have E. M. Webster's *The Moon Man*, which is, as Oskar Spate writes in his foreword, a "remarkable book about a remarkable man". Ms Webster reveals and interweaves in masterly fashion Miklouho's many parts, his varied scientific interests, their political and scientific contexts, his duplicities, the callous and unfeeling ways in which he treated his mother and sister, his friends and his creditors. Her book is at one and the same time a sensitive life, an examination of the many faces of self-deception in sincerity, a study in the psychology of colonialism and the convolutions of anti-colonialism, a lesson in the pitfalls of ethnographic fieldwork, and a handbook on how to get what you want without private means or paid employment.

Nikolai Miklouho was born at Rozhdestvensk, in the Novgorod area. He was expelled (perhaps for his radicalism) without right of re-entry from the Second St Petersburg Gymnasium when he was eighteen. So, supported by his impoverished widowed mother, he went to Germany to study natural sciences. There he

added the Maclay to his family name for reasons that remain obscure - though Greenop fancied it was in homage to a possible Scottish ancestor - and, in Darwinian enthusiasm, formed a close association with Ernst Haeckel. He accompanied Haeckel and Richard Greef to the Canary Islands to study sponges and fish, and made a side trip to Morocco in native attire. Soon after, together with Anton Dohrn, he researched the brains of rat-fish in Sicily, and conceived the idea which he pursued for the rest of his life, of a chain of marine zoological stations where scientists could work undisturbed.

Returning to Russia, as always on borrowed money, Miklouho tried to interest the influential in his idea. However, becoming concerned about the possible effects of the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 on life in the Red Sea, he set off in Arab robes for Suakin (on more borrowed money) to study more sponges and fish. He returned again some weeks later to resume the assault on his mother, wealthy or influential friends, the Russian Geographical Society, as well as the government, for funds to build marine stations and to support his researches - preferably in the Pacific. For now he had become interested in the "Papuan" of New Guinea, who, he felt, might reveal to an over-civilized, greedy and jaded Europe the generosity and natural goodness of pristine humanity. Through the good offices of powerful sympathizers negotiations ended with Miklouho bound for the Pacific aboard the Russian corvette *Vityaz*.

He disembarked at Copenhagen to complete his stores, went to London for a chat with T. H. Huxley, and rejoined the *Vityaz* at Plymouth. He also went ashore at Rio, in the Magellan Straits, Valparaiso, Easter Island and, finally, Samoa. Not every man's tourist, Miklouho observed the physiognomies of the natives, measured heads when he could, made for the fish markets in search of specimens of marine life, tramped the intertidal zones. Native peoples were of small interest to him.

While aboard ship he wrote papers and took sea temperatures. He found the officers and crew of the *Vityaz* tiresome.

In Samoa he hired as servants a young Samoan, "Boy", and a derelict Swedish seaman, Olsen. There was no contract of service, and Miklouho was vague about what the future might hold for them. Leaving Samoa, the *Vityaz* came to anchor in a south-eastern corner of Astrolabe Bay, which the Russians named Port Konstantin, close to the villages of Bonga and Gorendu. The ship's crew built a house for the explorer and his servants and, before they sailed, laid a circle of land-mines around the house. Though pristine with the milk of loving kindness in the eyes of some, the sailors had found Caliban to be human and dangerous. Miklouho was well provisioned with a mountain of stores and ammunition, and a twenty-one-gun salute from the *Vityaz* prior to departure made a deep impression on the local inhabitants.

Olsen and Miklouho were to spend some fifteen months in Astrolabe Bay, sharing the dubious honour of being the first European residents of Papua New Guinea. Miklouho could not have cared less for his companion, and yet Olsen with his mouth-organ and merry tunes probably came closer to the people of Bonga and Gorendu than Miklouho, his head stuffed with fanciful anthropological theories, would ever do. "Boy" died of fever. His body was secretly consigned to the sea one night (but not before the scientist had had his brains out for dissection), lest villagers concluded from the death that Miklouho was less than omnipotent. As it was, without actually lying, Miklouho managed to convey to the curious that he had "sent" Boy to his home over the sea.

Continually sick, suffering from tropical ulcers and recurrent bouts of malaria, Miklouho nevertheless travelled inland as far as he was able, explored northward to what is now Alexishafen and the outlying islands, and made himself a home from home on Bilbil Island in the bay. He found three or four natives who became his friends, ambitious or influential men in Bilbil and the villages close to his house who thought to gain from a reflected glory. But he was otherwise not much enthused by the people themselves. He liked to be alone. He was driven by his work and a need to move. He collected, dissected and classified flora and fauna from land and sea, made innumerable sketches, constructed a vocabulary and made some shift towards speaking and understanding the local vernaculars. Only when really laid low by malaria was he inactive.

He acquired the name "moon man" from a trick. Pouring spirits over a saucer of water at dusk, he lit the fumes; blue flames illuminated his pale face with an eerie glow, astounding his onlookers and leading them to think he might be other than human. Once, when asked if he was truly immortal, he stood up, presented his breast, and invited his interlocutor to find out for himself. On another occasion he stopped an incipient local war by indicating that he would cause a grievous earthquake if the parties involved did not immediately come to an accord. Recounting his experiences to a colleague in later years, he said, "In spite of five long months of almost daily attempts to murder me... I became... so much their master that they were not only convinced I was a higher being but firmly believed and still believe I am a kind of God." There are few signs of humanity in Miklouho and many indications of his attempts to gain ascendancy over the natives. When he returned to Astrolabe Bay, as he was to do twice in later years, it was in effect in order to carve out a kingdom for himself which no other white man (apart from his brother and those who paid for the privilege) would be allowed to sully.

The two marooned men were picked up by the Russian warship *Izumrud* but the crew became riddled with fever and Miklouho disembarked at Ternate, took a brief rest, and since he was now famous with a piece of New Guinea named after him - "the Maclay Coast"

# Beyond the Pale

Alan Brinkley

MICHAEL R. WEISSER  
A Brotherhood of Memory: Jewish landsmanshaftn in the new world  
303pp. Harper and Row. £16.95.  
0465007791

The orgy of celebration surrounding the centennial of the Statue of Liberty presented, among other things, a vivid picture of how Americans like to imagine the experience of the immigrants who helped people the nation in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The "huddled masses" fled poverty and oppression in the Old World, arrived in the United States bewildered but nevertheless exhilarated, and made their way steadily up the social ladder by dint of hard work, opportunity, freedom, and the willingness to assimilate. Within a generation or two, immigrant families were distinguishable from other Americans by little more than their last names and whatever endearing culinary or artistic traits they chose to preserve. In popular culture, the characteristic "immigrant" is Lee-Iacocca or Henry Kissinger.

Few scholars of immigration any longer embrace this traditional picture of the "melting-pot", but the concept of assimilation remains at the heart of much of the historical literature on the subject. In recent years, however, some scholars have begun to challenge such assumptions and to offer a very different picture: a picture of immigrant communities in which ethnicity remains a central, impermeable fact of life; a picture of men and women who never fully assimilate; a picture of a melting-pot which never melts. While assimilation theorists stress the tendency towards greater and greater unity and homogeneity in American society, ethnicity theorists suggest that there has been increasing cultural fragmentation.

Michael R. Weisser's skilful recreation of the world of the Jewish *landmanshaftn* will provide little comfort to advocates of either approach to immigration. The men and women he describes were, to be sure, notable for their

failure, even their stubborn refusal to become fully a part of the new American culture they encountered on arriving in the New World. But the price of their isolation was an increasing marginality even among their own fellow Jews - to whom the lure of assimilation proved far stronger than the security of the old ways.

The *landmanshaftn* emerged out of the second wave of Jewish immigration to America. A first wave, consisting largely of German Jews, had arrived in large numbers beginning before the Civil War. Its members were by the turn of the century prosperous and highly assimilated members of the middle class. The second wave began in the last years of the nineteenth century and continued through the first decades of the twentieth: a great exodus of eastern European Jews from the poverty and pogroms of the Russian "Pale". They were, on the whole, less prosperous, less educated, and less cosmopolitan than the German Jews who had preceded them. Many had grown up in the tiny, isolated shtetls of Russia and eastern Europe and knew virtually nothing of urban life or the larger world. Once in America, they huddled together defensively in close-knit communities. And they formed benevolent societies - *landmanshaftn* - to help shelter them from the strange and often hostile society around them.

The *landmanshaftn* were considerably more exclusive than the ethnic societies which emerged among some other immigrant groups in the same years. They generally drew together fellow villagers from the shtetls of the "Pale" and attempted to recreate at least something of the communities they had left behind. Members generally showed little interest in the concerns of the larger culture, little interest even in the great events affecting their fellow Jews in the Old World. They took no more than passing notice, for example, of the First World War. They paid only slightly greater attention to the destruction of the Pale in the 1920s, or even to the Holocaust or the creation of Israel.

"There was only one issue," Weisser writes, "that remained at the forefront of all society deliberations... and this was how to maintain the bonds between members that allowed them to cope with the unknown of the

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(Also available as an Oxford Paperback: *SOE in the Far East* by Charles Cruickshank, 0 19 286168 3, £5.95)



(now known as the Rai Coast) – he had little difficulty in persuading the authorities to underwrite an expedition to West New Guinea.

Returning to Java, he busied himself with papers and letters to the Dutch administration, protesting against the indiscriminate fighting and slavery in the eastern islands. He rested in comfort at Buitenzorg, the guest of the much harried Dutch administrator, fell in love with one of his host's daughters and was told he was no longer welcome. He visited Singapore and Bangkok (courtesy of the British), and made two epic journeys through the present Malaysia in search of what he imagined were "original Papuans", the Sakai, Semang and others now known as proto-Malays. He measured what heads he could, sketched, and collected flora and fauna. He found his Malay hosts a nuisance.

With his money troubles temporarily set at rest by a large loan from a Dutch merchant, Miklouho got together stores, trade goods and a prefabricated house and embarked from Tjirebon in Java, on the Sea Bird, bound for the Palau, Carolines and Admiralty Islands on a trading voyage. The captain had agreed to take him to Astrolabe Bay, but the voyage was not a happy one. Miklouho disliked the captain and loathed his fellow passengers, who were traders.

Once landed, he built a house a few miles from his former residence, and immediately wrote letters to various authorities condemning European trading practices in the islands, and pillorying the captain of the Sea Bird who, innocent of their content, promised to deliver them.

This second stay in Astrolabe Bay, in a much larger house with proper, separate servants' quarters, consolidated Miklouho's ascendancy. He stayed for over a year. His stores ran out, he fell sick. Rescued by a passing ship, he returned to Singapore, rested, somehow managed to extricate himself from his creditors, and was off to Hong Kong to take ship for Australia.

Although there was to be yet another journey – from Sydney to New Caledonia, through the (present) Vanuatu, the Banks, Solomons, Admiralty Islands, the Trobriands and along the southern shores of New Guinea to the

Torres Strait, Brisbane and back to Sydney – and another visit to Astrolabe Bay, it was in Australia that Miklouho consolidated his reputation. Together with James Chalmers, the missionary, he gave his weight to the protests against "blackbirding" and other nefarious methods of labour recruitment. As a scientist and explorer of international repute who had lived in New Guinea, his voice spoke more loudly than those of missionaries and others who had long agitated for reform. He also campaigned to have eastern New Guinea declared an international protectorate. He urged the Russian government to declare a protectorate; he wrote letters in support of a British protectorate; he wanted the Macleay Coast for his own, and drew up plans for a Russian colony there. Above all, he fought against German and Australian annexation.

Although Miklouho's representations were seriously received, they were not acted on. People and politics were not his forte. Still, he found time to work on manuscripts, write papers, attend the meetings of learned societies, dissect the brains of three prisoners executed at Brisbane (a Chinese, a white Australian and an Aboriginal, whose body he sent to a colleague in Germany) as well as realize his first love, a marine zoological station on Sydney Heads. Wealthy landowners asked him to their properties. In Sydney, Sir John Robertson was a congenial host and benefactor, and history repeated itself. He fell in love with his host's widowed daughter, Margaret, and against the strenuous opposition of her family eventually married her.

A few years later he returned to Russia with his family to accept the acclaim of his compatriots. Though he needed it, he gave himself no rest. He wrote and delivered papers, addressed himself again to the issues of marine stations, his right to the Macleay Coast, the kind of protectorate appropriate to New Guinea, and the formation of a Russian colony there under the control of his brother. It was too much. He became sick for the last time and died.

E. M. Webster is careful never to judge the man, contenting herself with detailing the contexts of his actions. Nevertheless her concluding pages read like a eulogy at the memorial service of a very able, but unpopular, recently

departed colleague. There is admiration and respect for work done, but little affection. Miklouho was brave and courageous, with the cunning of Odysseus. He made many difficult exploratory journeys and recorded them all. He published some eighty papers before he died, which are still cited. He packed more into his short life than any dozen longer-lived of his peers.

Yet death was kind to Miklouho-Macleay. Given the direction of his life, his marriage would scarcely have survived much longer the borrowing, sponging and being dunned for unpaid debts. A few more years and Gabriel Monod might have had to unravel his pangenetic on the saintly scientist. Leo Tolstoy's praises of the humane humanitarian might have soured in the knowledge that he was ready to shoot a Chinese labourer in Malaysia for not answering his hail. No wonder he instructed his wife to destroy all his personal papers after his death. She loved and obeyed him. For that the world is perhaps richer rather than poorer.

Ms Webster's truly splendid biography – beautifully produced with maps and many reproductions of Miklouho's sketches – reveals Miklouho-Macleay as hollow inside, like Conrad's Kurtz. Those who could not discuss philosophical or scientific matters with him were "firesome" – even if they loaned him money or helped him in other ways. There is no doubt of his charm and persuasiveness, but his political ineptness surely lay in his disregard of others. True, he fed Olsen when the latter was sick, but there was much self-interest there and one may doubt whether, otherwise, he ever extended a helping hand to anyone.

As a natural scientist he was like a maverick beagle, mostly chasing rabbits in mistake for the hare. His ethnography lies in his sketches and drawings – he had little understanding of people and culture. His ideals and humanitarianism were pitted with arrogant self-concern. In the completeness of his self-indulgence he never learned to submit his very considerable energies to the needs or interests of others. If his faults were not his alone and his virtues extraordinary, he seems to have lacked that warmth and compassion which mark the truly great as they do the ordinary.

the Arctic is firmly recognized, and Lopez carefully explains their way of looking at the world. He also makes use of Eskimo terms wherever he can, and manages to spell them correctly.

Unfortunately, he seems to think that Greenlandic Eskimos have a syllabic writing system, whereas syllabics came with missionaries to the eastern Canadian Arctic and never spread beyond. In Greenland, as in Alaska and even in Siberia before a Cyrillic campaign in the 1960s, when Eskimo peoples adopted writing they were taught roman orthographies. He also fails to distinguish carefully between Eskimo groups from different parts of the Arctic, and some of the terms he uses generally in fact have quite specific provenance. These are small but irritating exceptions to the care with which this book is written, all the more so since Lopez himself would never make analogous mistakes about biology; he would never confuse the range of the calls, for example, of different species of elder duck.

Lopez's sense of the largest ideological issues is paramount. He is always reaching from within the Arctic to universal preoccupations. His wish to see unity in nature leads him towards, or is a theoretical counterpart to, a form of political environmentalism. In one of the reveries that are scattered through the book, Lopez summarizes his cause:

The dignity we seek is one beyond that articulated by Enlightenment philosophers. A more radical Enlightenment is necessary, in which dignity is understood as an innate quality, not as something tendered by someone outside. And that common dignity must include the land and its plants and creatures. Otherwise it is only an invention and not, as it should be, a perception about the nature of living matter.

Many who have been lucky enough to travel in the Arctic are strongly addicted to it. *Arctic Dreams* goes a very long way towards explaining why.

## Excitement in the inselbergs

Wilma George

MALCOLM COE

*Islands in the Bush: A natural history of the Kora National Reserve, Kenya* 240pp. George Philip. £14.95. 0 540 01086 3

Kora is a dry triangle of scrub and rock on the Tana River just south of the Equator in the centre of Kenya. In 1970, George Adamson – known to the media as Elsa the lioness's adoptive father – moved into the area with his lions. As a result, Kora became a national reserve; but its future as a wilderness is threatened. Somali nomads in search of browse and water for their starving animals make incursions; a hydroelectric scheme has been proposed; and it has not so far been possible to get the reserve upgraded to a national park.

At this point, enter Malcolm Coe. As an enthusiast for conservation he set himself the enormous task of listing all the animals and plants that live in the zone. To this effect, he proposed an expedition – consisting of biologists, geologists and geographers – and applied to the Royal Geographical Society and the National Museums of Kenya for support. Thus, the Kora Research Project was born and *Islands in the Bush* is its story. Like most books of its kind, it revels in descriptions of physical hazards and fierce animals that lie in wait for the explorer. But it also describes how an expedition is planned and operated, how money is raised and how striking camp is only the beginning of the more formidable task of writing up the scientific results. *Islands in the Bush* is strongly recommended to tenderfoot leaders of expeditions.

The islands of the title are the rocky outcrops, or inselbergs, that stick out in the grey wilderness of Acacia-Commiphora scrub. There, among the tumbled rocks, grow spiky euphorbias like giant cactus trees, the frankincense tree and the "cat's pee tree". Colonies of grey hyrax whistle warnings as the leopard pounces. Spiny mice scurry behind rocks to avoid the prowling mongoose. Flat-headed bats and pancake tortoises slot snugly into rock crevices. In an ephemeral pool, small eggs suddenly moisten into a soup of fairy shrimps – with ten days to mature or perish.

In the sea of stunted trees round the islands, scorpions tumble from the branches, myriads of beetles and cockroach ants take up residence in the swollen acacia spines. In the dust, beetles scamper and caracal cats chase lizards or sit and watch the strange intruders of the expedition. In the muddy waters of the river, catfish patrol – locating floating fruit with long sensory tentacles – and elephant snout fish emit electric pulses in pursuit of worms. Across the hot sandbanks, brilliantly coloured tiger beetles race on long legs only to fall into the entomologist's trap. In the bush, the entomologist himself gets trapped (caught in drooping swaths of prickles), the ichthyologist traps crocodiles in his nets and everyone trips over the tails of Adamson's lions. In camp, the scientists are protected by a fence from the crocodiles and lions but the bush creeps in, regardless, to take advantage of the new source of food and shelter: an enterprising gerbil busily extracts the bark-wool stuffing from Coe's pillow; a yellow-billed hornbill dines on the entomological collections; and Basil – the fat-tailed rat spared from the pot by his engaging character – becomes an official member of the expedition.

*Islands in the Bush* is a romantic book about a serious ecological project. It is written with infectious enthusiasm, and shows just how accessible and exciting a scientific book can be.

*Isak Dinesen's Africa* (142pp. Bantam. £19.95. 0 593 01049 3) contains 107 colour photographs – some of them taken during the filming of the Universal Pictures *Out of Africa* – to illustrate short extracts from Isak Dinesen's *Out of Africa*, *Shadows on the Grass* and *Letters from Africa* 1914-1931, with an introduction by Judith Thurman. There are also reproduced thirty-three black-and-white photographs from the Dinesen archive in Denmark.

## Paradise reconstituted

David Cannadine

N. T. P. MURPHY  
*In Search of Blandings*  
258pp. Secker and Warburg. £12.95. 0 436 29720 5

Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, it remains a widely held belief among many addicts that the fictional world of P. G. Wodehouse is pure fantasy, created out of nothing more than his inspired and innocent imagination: a "Garden of Eden", a "timeless fairyland", unswayed by sex or sin, and untainted by the slums or the suburbs. And Wodehouse himself did much to foster this impression, deliberately posturing as mentally negligible, a perpetual adolescent, his own Bertie Wooster, with his head in the clouds, his feet in the cradle – and with his pen almost inadvertently dipped in nectar.

Yet it has also been argued that his prolific output was both derived from, and constrained by, the very narrow limits of his own experience. He was a younger son from a large upper-middle-class family with distant aristocratic connections, and made his early career in the City, in journalism and in entertainment, topped off by increasingly regular professional visits to the United States. And it was this amalgam of family background and personal experience which provided both the setting and the substance of his stories. Hence the public schools and the stately homes of the English countryside, the clubs, houses and hotels of London, the allusions to banking, the theatre and the newspaper business, and the transatlantic excursions to Hollywood, New York and Long Island.

N. T. P. Murphy's book seeks to let in still more daylight on the magic by investigating the links between Wodehouse's world and his work in greater detail. For it is clear that, in many ways, Wodehouse was far less inventive than is often supposed. From the clues scattered profusely in the books, it is possible to discover the derivation of the names he gave his many characters, the originals of the people he created, and the models for the mansions and villages he evoked so mellowly.

For example, many of Wodehouse's secondary characters are derived from his own extended family of fifteen uncles and twenty aunts, with whom he spent his school holidays, since his father worked abroad in the Colonial Service. It has long been recognized that this explains why he was much happier in writing about aunt and nephew relationships than mother and son. But it is also clear that his uncles provided the inspiration for those many upper-class vicars, generals and admirals who

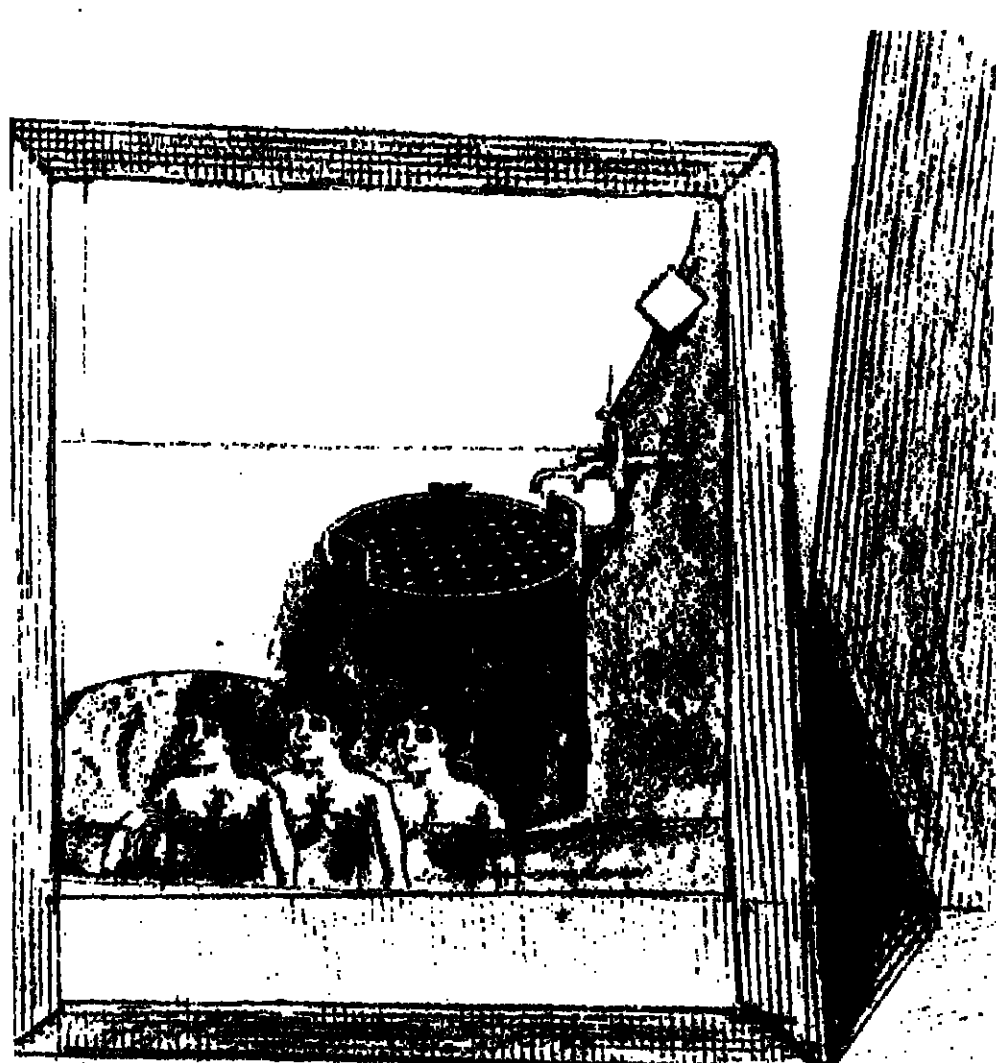
inhabit his books. And it seems likely that the model for such intimidating female intellectuals as Honoria Glossop and Florence Craye was his cousin Helen Marion Wodehouse, the philosopher and sometime Mistress of Girtton.

By contrast, the central figures in his novels are derived more from his friends than from his family, especially those acquaintances he made in his days as a young man in London at the turn of the century. We have his own word for it that Pamith was modelled on Rupert D'Oyly Carte; Ukridge was an amalgam of four early and impecunious associates; Bertie Wooster was derived from Lord Mildmay, George Grossmith the younger and the Cazalet brothers; and Jeeves owed much to J. M. Barrie's legendary butler, Frank Thurston. But the most fully authenticated character is Galahad Threepwood, who was based very accurately on the men about town of the 1880s and 1890s. The Pelican Club, to which he belonged, really did exist; and many of Gally's best stories relate to genuine people and genuine episodes.

Geographically, too, Wodehouse only wrote of what he knew and where he had been. Predictably, London is at the centre of his world, but he gives a very partial view. The Drones Club was apparently modelled on Buck's, and the Barriault Hotel is obviously derived from Claridge's. Lord Emsworth's town house, 17 Norfolk Street, Mayfair, stood at the same address as Wodehouse's London home in the 1930s. Further distant, there is Dulwich, where Wodehouse had been to school, and whose playing-fields he rendered so affectionately in his early novels; and there is Wimbledon Common, home of Ukridge's Aunt Julia and of Mr and Mrs Bingo Little. But there is no metropolitan panorama, no real feel for the city as a whole. As with all his settings, it is a backdrop not an environment.

Even when writing of the English countryside, Wodehouse's world was notably narrow. The Celtic fringe, the West Country and the north of England are virtually ignored; Kent and Norfolk are briefly mentioned; and Hampshire provided many of the names (Emsworth, Bosham, Threepwood) for the Blandings saga. But the heart of Wodehouse's rural world was the Severn Valley, where he had spent those holidays with his aunts and uncles, and about which he invariably wrote with the innocent, wide-eyed nostalgia of a child. Here he situated the homes of Sir Watkyn Bassett and Aunt Dahlia; here he located the "Angler's Rest", so beloved of Mr Mulliner; and here he set Blandings Castle itself, an amalgam of boyhood memories of Corsham Court, Weston Park and Sudeley Castle.

As a piece of literary detective work, Murphy's book makes fascinating reading; indeed, his account of how he followed up esoteric



Max Ernst's unused illustration for René Crevel's *Mr Knife and Miss Fork*, 1931; it is taken from Max Ernst Frontages by Werner Spies (107pp. Thames and Hudson. Paperback, £12.95. 0 500 27422 3).

references, tracked down distant relations and located obscure villages, is almost as intriguing as the results themselves. Inevitably, perhaps, this is largely an antiquarian exercise, and the author lacks that broader historical perspective which would have enabled him to make more of his findings. There is, for instance, much still to be learned about the originals of Wodehouse's dotty and eccentric peers. Were they purely imaginary? Were there specific models? Or did he just elaborate on the conventional inter-war gossip-column image? There is, after all, not that much difference between such marginal men as Lord Emsworth with his pig and the Tantamount family, so well described

by Aldous Huxley in *Point Counter Point*.

Above all, there is the question of Wodehouse's language and imagery. The building bricks of his verbal edifice were obviously derived from his late-nineteenth-century public-school education: the Greek and Latin classics, the Bible and the Prayer Book, Shakespeare and the Romantic poets. But where did he learn to use words and phrases in the way he did? Consider this gem: "a blonde to make a bishop kick a hole in a stained glass window". It sounds a plausible piece of Plum. In fact, it is by that fellow Old Alleynian and near-contemporary, Raymond Chandler. From *The Little Nugget* to *The Big Sleep* was but a step.

## No place apart

Hugh Brody

BARRY LOPEZ  
*Arctic Dreams: Imagination and desire in a northern landscape*  
464pp. Macmillan. £14.95. 0 333 42244 9

Arctic travellers once believed that scurvy was caused by too much time spent in bleak surroundings. If unrelieved by a careful régime of organized diversions, the barrenness of the far north could lead, it was said, to depression and scurvy's slow and painful death. Survivors of ships that became trapped in late summer ice conditions told horrifying tales, both of the landscape and of decimation by its own mysterious illness. Such stories played their part in the history of Arctic images: emptiness, harshness and extremes of cold challenged explorers to risk their all in adventures to the north.

Yet Barry Lopez's new book, *Arctic Dreams* (its ridiculous and inappropriate subtitle, *Imagination and desire in a northern landscape*, could be the result of some publisher's commercial apprehensions and is best forgotten), is an intriguing paean to a more or less opposite view: of an Arctic that is magnificently beautiful and teeming with life. In a set of long and discursive chapters (four are of more than fifty pages each), *Arctic Dreams* is itself alive with enthusiasm for, as well as great knowledge of, the birds and animals that crowd into the far north every year to feed and breed. An environment that can sustain many hundreds of thousands of gulliform or massively crowded nesting sites, where European whalers could slaughter 2,000 bowhead in one season, where several hundred polar bears pass through a single Canadian Arctic town every year, where

hundreds of thousands of caribou migrate in a million spend their summers calving and feeding – this is not a place where we should expect to be driven by harsh emptiness into any sickness of the soul. If this landscape seems desolate, says Lopez, it is because its seasonal occupants, among the most magnificent of living creatures, have once again migrated south.

*Arctic Dreams* moves with great ease and fluency from place to place and species to species, taking us to the Bering Straits and the edge of the Russian Arctic, to Banks and Ellesmere Islands where Canada fractures into outcrops of tundra and cliffs before land finally gives way to the polar ice-cap, and to Lancaster Sound, the stretch of water to the north of Baffin Island where the mysterious narwhal – prototype for the unicorn – appears each spring from scientists know not where.

Lopez also makes all-manner of historical, literary and visual associations. He sees similarities between the Thule culture of the modern Eskimo and the Magdalenian hunters of the Upper Palaeolithic, between a pipeline in Alaska, and the launch complexes at Cape Canaveral, between what he feels for the Eskimo and a Japanese word for the victims of Hiroshima, between the colour of a lemming's bone and that of a lichen near by. This continual reference from what he sees to other, sometimes very distant matters always enlarges the frame of the book. Lopez thus reminds us again and again that the Arctic is not a place apart.

One of the remarkable strengths of *Arctic Dreams* is its organization. While explorers, with their fanciful and often self-defeating preoccupations, come at the end – long after the reader has been introduced to more than any single explorer ever could have experienced. The original inhabitants of the place – the Inuit and their various cultural predecessors – are present throughout. Their claim to

## Past resuscitated

Phillip Ward-Green

DAVID LEON HIGDON  
*Shadows of the Past in Contemporary British Fiction*  
219pp. Macmillan. £25. 0 333 26937 3

David Leon Higdon, in *Shadows of the Past in Contemporary British Fiction*, sees Britain, emerging from the Second World War, as traumatized by self-doubt, with its empire dismantled, its historical persona in danger of extinction, seeking revitalization through a resurgence of interest in the past and a reassertion of traditional values. The Festival of Britain, the accession of a monarch with a glorious name, and the pageantry of her coronation were crucial events in this "New Renaissance" and played, he believes, an important part in the developing thought of several of the writers whose works illustrate the theme of his book.

Three classes of novel are categorized: retrospective dialogues (such as L. P. Hartley's *The Go-Between*, Angus Wilson's *Late Call*, Rayner Heppenstall's *The Woodshed*, and Brian Moore's *I Am Mary Dunne*) in which an individual confronts and meticulously re-examines significant moments in his or her own past; imitations or parodies of past works (such as George MacDonald Fraser's *Royal Flash*,

Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Brian Aldiss's *Frankenstein Unbound*); and character studies (such as Angus Wilson's *Anglo-Saxon Attitudes*, Margaret Drabble's *Realms of Gold* and John Fowles's *Daniel Martin*) whose chief actors (historians, archaeologists, etc) are professionally involved with the past, which thus provides "an objective correlative for the problems the individual faces". Numerous other works are discussed in passing, and the author has corresponded or had interviews with many of his subject writers.

By their nature, the novels of Higdon's first category accommodate themselves to a certain neatness of architecture: a forgotten diary is discovered and read, with important consequences in the novel's development; old photographs, letters or books are taken out and perused and then put away; a psychoanalytic process is initiated, pursued and concluded. The novels discussed in this section are among the best in modern English fiction.

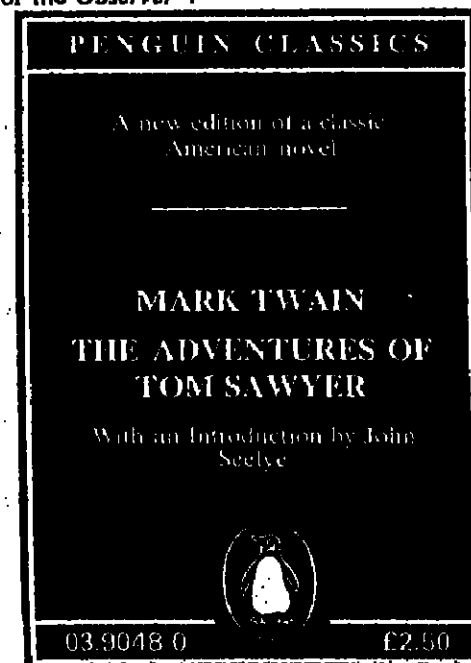
Imitations of past works can be a depressing genre, especially where wit or genius is lacking, as in many of the attempts to resuscitate the Victorian novel. George MacDonald Fraser's sophisticated upgrading of *The Prisoner of Zenda*, and the paradox of his sustainably casual narrative style contrasted with the comic pedantry of his textual notation, succeed admirably. Jean Rhys, in her novel recounting the life of Rochester's mad first wife, the Creole heiress Antoinette Mason, fully repays

her debt to Charlotte Brontë. On the other hand, *Frankenstein Unbound*, apart from its unexpectedly good portrait sketches of Byron and Shelley, is a miserable pastiche of one of the most underrated novels in English.

The author has the highest esteem for the last group, "rich evocations of the past", and his attempt to justify this proves correspondingly least successful. The historical aspects of *Anglo-Saxon Attitudes*, based on the Piltdown hoax, are interwoven with the failed private life of its historian chief character, in a plot which, it must be said, verges on the sprawl. From this it is saved by the Dickensian breadth of Wilson's humour, his warmth and his common sense. Similarly, Frances Wingate, in *Realms of Gold*, conducts her private life, increasingly unsatisfactorily, in tandem with her career as an archaeologist. In spite of the novel's unevenness of pace, lack of balance and irritating asides to the reader, it is redeemed by its sincerity of characterization. But David Leon Higdon makes his most extravagant claims for *Daniel Martin*: it is not "Tolstoyan" (sic) in scope, not do the ruins, spread over four continents and adduced as objective correlatives to the collapse of the protagonist's life, perform that function. Besides which, the novel's length and repetitiousness vitiate the insights it offers.

Author and publisher between them have been amazingly careless, not to say illiterate, in places; "hereditary" for "heredity" (p9),

"Chardybdis" (p80), "Byron and Shelley... are more quickly, though no more less deftly sketched" (p125), and "He hold nothing back...", as the start of the book's penultimate sentence, are but a few examples. Worse, Virginia Woolf is misquoted as writing, "On or about December, 1910, human character changed". And who is "Katherine Whitehouse of the Observer"?





## Marginal lives

A. S. Byatt

BARBARA PYM  
An Academic Question  
182pp. Macmillan. £9.95.  
0333 418433  
ROBERT EMMETT LONG  
Barbara Pym  
256pp. New York: Ungar; distributed by  
Lorimer Publishing. \$16.95.  
0804 25450

Barbara Pym's "Academic Novel" was begun in 1970, in a mistaken attempt to write something "sharp" and "swinging" about a provincial university. She wrote and abandoned two drafts, one in the first and one in the third person, which have been amalgamated and "smoothed" by her diligent editor Hazel Holt, who also provided the title. The result is thin and unappealing. Caro, the heroine of *An Academic Question*, is a graduate wife, married to a characterless anthropologist — she chose her diminutive in deference to Lady Caroline Lamb, but, like all Pym's women, is a distinct failure in Byronic terms. This is an exiguous anthropological plot, concerning some papers improperly filched from a dying missionary, and an even more exiguous adulterous plot. There is also a usual Pym eccentric spinster, this one preoccupied with a tragicomic vision of hedgehog turds and the eternal jumble-sale jumpers. This character, Dolly, produces an innocent vision of the transience of human life that is Pym at her best:

Kitty and I living here as young girls, going to dances and wearing flesh-coloured artificial silk stockings. Kitty used to have her ironed to make them shiny. Such detail and now people wear nylon tights and we shall all soon be gone anyway.

It is a moment comic and appalling, like the one in *Some Tame Gazelle* where Belinda, sitting in bed with a murt and some old copies of the *Gentlewoman*, murmurs "Timor mortis conturbat me".

Caro, on the other hand, is simply horrid. It is hard to know if her creator, who treats all her creations with a muted blanket irony, knew how very horrid she was. She combines the usual malice of Pym's self-centred observers with a wholly unsuccessful attempt on the sharp "satirical" note of the 1960s. The angry graduate wives of that decade, who wrote to the *Guardian* complaining of kitchen and confinement, claimed they wanted to use their minds. Caro has none. She judges people on their clothes and little stylistic failings. An academic wife at a party remarks the flamboyant dress of a male acquaintance. "I sup-

pose that's quite the latest", says Heather, implausibly, and Caro tells the reader "Evidently a life spent with card indexes did not make for generosity of spirit, I thought." This could be self-directed; Miss Pym was a card-indexer; but its tone is typical of Pym's more unworthy undercurrents, tiny snap judgments, vaguely addressed to the mockery of nuances of social style, petty about pettiness. Early reviewers of Pym's work praised her "sparkling feminine malice". A harsh view of her work would add that its central characteristics are indeed malice and a kind of narcissistic self-pity, since the reader's generous sympathy for the unperceived virtue or agony is usually required for the excellent woman, the sharp observer whose need for love goes unrequited and unremarked.

Why, therefore, this sudden blossoming of critical attention to Pym's oeuvre? It is easy enough to understand why she has a devoted following of readers — she has the ability to create a comfortable little world in which they can relax, locate themselves with ease, confirm their prejudices and enjoy their own superiority. But why the PhD dissertations, the academic conferences, *La Narrativa di Barbara Pym*, "Text and Subtext in the Novels of Barbara Pym", etc? In England, a curious combination of unlikely allies brought her to our attention. There were Philip Larkin and Lord David Cecil in the *TLS*, followed by fogies of various ages, all of whom feel a nostalgia for memorable manners and habits of small folk in the days of England's greatness, or anyway England's certainty of its own cultural identity. With this kind of pleasure in comic self-deprecation goes the English terror of anything that could possibly be called pretentious, phoney or pseud. Malice is all right, as long as it's unpretentious and not too loud.

A quite different part of our cultural life produced the flowering of Virago and the rehabilitation of the library novel and the good read, which has been marvellous, and the feminist-academic seriousness with which this "good read" has been taken, which is arguably less healthy, even perhaps pretentious or phoney. This resuscitation of women's novels runs into taught courses in popular literature or women's literature, where a moral and academic imperative is that we must not disparage (or criticize?) what the people, or women, do in fact read and like, and we must by no means talk about what these patronizingly located bodies of readers find it difficult, even initially, to read or like. We must also, of course, not mock women, blacks, gays or any other disadvantaged group — and Barbara Pym

is eminently safe in that her targets are safely in the past, in a bourgeois world which may then have been cramped and painful but now has the discreet charm of a peepshow. The new philistinism and the old thus unite to produce an academic field in which Pym can be seen as meriting the same kind of attention as Murdoch or Lessing or Spark.

It is harder to see why this interest should have extended to Europe or the United States. Robert Emmett Long is an American who has written us a full-length critical book on Pym. It is old-fashioned, as befits its subject; the bulk of it consists of a retelling of the plots of the novels, occasionally pointing out the moments of "high comedy". His tone is faintly dubious about his own enterprise. He is possibly not sure how good Pym is — he sounds half bemused, as did her anthropologist friend recently in the *Sunday Telegraph*, who wrote "Barbara Pym was not perceived by any of us as any kind of major novelist", and went on to give good reasons why she should not be. Long makes one substantial critical point. Pym's people, he claims, and not only her people, but her whole world and the Anglican Church in her world, and English society at large are "marginal". He writes oddly and memorably in his peroration of Pym's "radiant identification with marginal people", though he doesn't quite see this as a placed artistic strategy. "It is one of the brilliant strokes of Pym's fiction that she should have projected her own disabilities and uncertainty of role upon her novels." It is possible to connect this perception of Pym's world as a "marginal" world with the post-modernist American obsession with entropy, running-down, lack of centrality. There is truth in this, but it is more a sociological truth than a literary-critical one; it explains Pym's vogue, but doesn't endorse claims for her as a major artist.

Pym's most persuasive advocate was of course Philip Larkin. In his preface to his own novel, *Jill*, he remarked with approval of his own wartime generation that events had cut them ruthlessly down to size. Pym was also of

that generation who were cut down to size; a good joke is socially acceptable, but a romantic gesture, unless heavily disguised with irony and deprecation, is not. Everyone in Pym's books is cut down to size, no less ruthlessly because she is so deceptively mild. It is a way of looking at the world, stoical and ironic. It is part of our contemporary English aimlessness and gloom.

In 1937 O. D. Leavis, in the pages of *Scrutiny*, fulminated against Dorothy Sayers for pretensions to literary merit when she was only writing vulgar bestsellers. Mrs Leavis's rage is unattractive (and can of course be immediately classed as pretentious). She could not understand Miss Sayers's vogue amongst intelligent readers in common rooms. Dorothy Sayers has since been cut down to size quite efficiently — university teachers are much more likely to sneer at Lord Peter Wimsey's sexual prowess, *noblesse oblige* and cricket than to confess to a *tendresse* for his milieu. Barbara Pym wanted, we are told, to write novels like Angela Thirkell, a good comic library novelist who disrupted her own comfortable world with shrill hostility to the 1945 Labour Government. In the end, I think, Miss Pym does go long with her and with Sayers. She lacks Miss Spark's metaphysical wit and icy eye for moral and spiritual inadequacies. She lacks the moral logical rigour and the tolerant detachment of Fay Weldon's moral satire. If we want an analysis of the world in which the mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation, we might turn to Stanley Middleton, who is less charming, but in the end more poetic and wiser. Her prose lacks the flexibility of all of these; too much of it is good school-magazine jokiness. She appears gentler than Spark or Weldon but is also infinitely less generous, humane and imaginative. Good relaxing reading is a matter of personal choice, *pace* Queenie Leavis. I'd rather have cloth-of-gold wedding dresses, quotations from *Urne Buriall* and tigerish passion in crime writers acquainted of murder than brown frocks, knitted socks in clerical grey and cauliflower cheese.

and amusing" — and he knows his Wittgenstein, or it will be apparent that "I" could have been just as successful — and infinitely nicer — had it not been for the unfairness of . . .

So all turns on what "I" sound like. Here, there is excellent news for collectors of English voices. Never far away, often unmistakable in these pages is a highly prized specimen: Lord, given to displays of knowingsness, and eager to prove its mastery both of European languages and of contemporary American idiom. Sometimes it is the loudness that is foremost:

I could imagine more appreciative welcomes for a young novelist whose first book had been hailed as "amusing and accomplished" (*Oxford Mail*) and whose second was said to be "swinging stuff" by the *Belfast News-Letter*, but that enemy of promise, a pram, was in the rented hallway, and a living had to be made. Stay, Muse, while I make a brief detour.

At other times, it is the knowingsness that reaches us first:

"And Isalah was telling me how much it costs to build down here — correction: how little!" "Isalah," I said, "Would that be the original one or only little deuterio, his kid cousin? Or — hey, wait a minute. It's not Berlin, is it?" "That's Irving, smartass, and it's neither."

Oh yes; readers, too, to have to be on their cultural toes.

Several of the stories are set in the southern Spain of expatriate writers, painters and film folk and in the time, it is carefully explained, before the hordes came. This allows knowingsness to play also on Spanishry; although it is unwise to mock tourists' Spanish if you mis-transcribe proper names. But one of the "Spanish" stories leaves behind expatriates and makes bold to evoke the hearts and minds of Spanish villagers. We all know how to adjust our voice for uncomprehending foreigners; make it louder. The written equivalent, it seems, is: make it more florid ("the restaurant tables wore starched skirts and bore reticent glasses").

If success is the preoccupation, its measure is performance: the question we never get away from is "How was I?" If you feel invaded by this question, sit back and think of England.

## From ghetto to badland

John Melmoth

BEN OKRI  
Incidents at the Shrine  
128pp. Heinemann. £9.95.  
0434 532304

Reversing the more usual course of events, Ben Okri has followed the two novels he wrote while in his teens — *Flowers and Shadows* and *The Landscapes Within* — with a collection of short stories. Whereas the novels could be regarded as juvenilia, the stories are terse, poised, poetic. *Flowers and Shadows* was oddly reminiscent of Lawrence's *The White Peacock*; the stories owe more to Joyce and Chekhov and, less to their advantage, to Hemingway. With them Okri has found a voice and established a style of his own.

Not only is Okri working in a different medium, he is also exploring a different milieu: the ghettos of Lagos and the badlands of London. *Flowers and Shadows* toyed uneasily with the *haute arrivisme* of manicured lawns, cocktail parties and Japanese cars. Although Omovo in *The Landscapes Within* had to work for a living, as an artist he escaped the class system. This new volume, in contrast, immerses itself in poverty and deprivation, and the ways of dealing with it in the bars and discos of Lagos and the baleful wastes of London's high-rises. Only the first story, "Laughter Beneath the Bridge", deals with a recognizably bourgeois world of public schools, and it does so only to put it at risk in the Nigerian civil war of 1967-71.

For most of Okri's protagonists life is singularly lacking in comfort and glamour, and their attempts at escape range from signing up for correspondence courses guaranteed to develop their business acumen to dabbling in the supernatural. The baroque contortions, delusions and indulgences of their mental lives contrast with their unpromising physical existences. Agodi, in "Converging City", responds to one commercial disappointment by braiding his hair and beard, donning yellow and purple robes and going into business as the true prophet. "Masquerades" inspects the social life of a night-soil worker who compensates for the wilelessness of his job by creating a spotless slum penthouse, hung with his terylene suits, photographs of himself, a picture of Christ and a Benin mask. Compulsively dousing himself with lavender and jasmine is his only way of coping with the inchoate nihilism which goes

with the job: "When I look at people I see nothing — what doesn't turn to shit turns to dust." Ajeunle Joe, eponymous focus of "The Dream Vendor's August", the longest and most complex of the stories, combats futility with occultism, selling pamphlets on "How to Fight Witches and Wizards" and protecting himself from disaster with rings, one of which was taken from the body of Isaac Newton and one of which belonged to King Solomon.

Okri's preoccupation with mental flights to various destinations gives his stories a heightened and surreal quality. In "Laughter Beneath the Bridge" three boys haunt a deserted school in a state of superheated reverie induced by fear and hormonal promptings: "I dreamed of her new-formed breasts when the lizards chased us from the dormitories, and when the noise of the fighter planes drove us to the forests." In "The Dream Vendor's August" Joe converses regularly with a dwarf who visits his dreams.

The two stories set in London are similarly concerned with cognitive dissonances: the narrator of "Disparities" is all twitching and inconsequentiality; the watcher in "A Hidden History" spots a lunatic beating his coat against a lamp-post. They are, however, principally remarkable for their exaggerated treatment of the unspeakable, an accumulation of nastiness that flirts with bathos. "Disparities" wanders into a reeking pub, peopled with the "very cream of leftovers" — trendies, deadbeats and old men coughing up phlegm while the jukebox plunges the "human cesspit into perfect, unmelodious gloom". "A Hidden History" presses between its pages the flora of urban decay, the "vegetable life" of corruption, "purple and green . . . beautiful to look at like the fata Morgana". The problem is that the facts of depression themselves become merely depressing if they remain without context or explanation. Okri's account of the decline and fall of London is metaphysical and somewhat unconvincing: he couches it in terms of "a monstrous negative force" which emanates from "the wild gardens of all the rotting houses".

The distinction between the Lagos stories and the London ones is revealing. Those set in Africa are the more complex and fertile, the language of the shanties has a vitality which the inevitable solecisms can only enhance: "Try us for size. A trial will convict you." Okri maintains that "Africa is the only place I really want to write about. It's a gift to the writer." One hopes that, as an expatriate, he will be able to go on doing so, and as memorably.

## Parsons Green pleasures

Miranda Seymour

MAX DAVIDSON  
Hugger Mugger  
185pp. Heinemann. £9.95.  
0434 175218

Do not be discouraged by the jacket blurb of *Hugger Mugger*, which promises yet another study of a disintegrating marriage. Max Davidson's novel does not belong to the genre of masochistic self-analysis feebly disguised as fiction. Rather, Davidson is a sharp recorder of the modern comedy of urban manners, in and out of bed. Banal situations are illuminated by his unflinching shrewd sense of the ridiculous. All relationships are clichés when it comes to love and sex, and Davidson allows his characters enough intelligence to know it:

What most depressed him was the hackneyed nature of the script. For someone whose medieval history paper at Cambridge had been regarded as an academic tour de force, it was humbling to tread a path which married men of all sorts had been treading for centuries.

The mugger of the title is Tony Baxter, an ambitious civil servant with the instincts of a football hooligan. If he can't win the match, he will tear up the pitch. The mugger is his wife Jo, talented diviner and trader of the *via media*. Domination is Mugger's kick; Hugger is an unfulfilled hunter after undefined ideas:

The confused nature of the quest trapped her into so many contradictions that she was a walking muddle. On Mondays and Wednesdays she helped in a shop selling second-hand clothes for a Third World char-

ity; on Tuesdays and Thursdays she charged people from the Third World extortionate rates for teaching them English.

A perfect couple in the eyes of their Parsons Green neighbours, the Baxters are in many ways ideally suited. What they need, and almost unconsciously set out to find, is novelty. Tony picks up a secretary at the office, only to find that a mistress is much less easily disposed of than a wife. Sex is all very well, but not when the sexual object addresses you as "Tone" and lives in a flat where a laundry-box of mouldy denim and festering tights placed under a film of marmalade, eggshells and burnt bacon can hopefully be designated "the breakfast-room". Driven beyond kindness by his own sudden attack of amnesia — is she Mandy? Angie? Sandy? — Tony takes the mugger's way out, abuse.

Jo, meanwhile, is guiltily discovering the beauty of platonic love with Tony's bridge partner, Guy. She had thought she enjoyed disagreeing with Tony, but how much more wonderful it is to be in harmony with Guy, whose views so perfectly mirror her own. Undel, that is, she realizes how obligingly Guy will always shift his views to accommodate his companion's. She offers her opinion of a book, but not in order to have it repeated as Guy's own analysis.

Expectations end with a neat reversal as Jo packs her bags, leaving Tony to the bleak joys of bridge without the sandwich-maker. Being an intellectual mugger, he is already evolving a strategy to rebuild the ruin.

Slight in scope but sharp as a knife, well paced and artfully balanced, *Hugger Mugger* is a deftly comic study of the hypocrisy of love.

## Compensatory acts

Adewale Maja-Pearce

LEWIS NKOSI  
Mating Birds  
184pp. Constable. £8.95.  
009 4672407

The relationship between the black man and the white woman is a well-worn theme in African fiction. Such novels are interesting less for their literary quality than for what they tell us about the African's response to the colonial encounter. This is evident in the treatment of the women, who are made to carry a symbolic weight that has nothing to do with them as individual human beings and everything to do with them as representatives of a former colonial power. The levels of brutality inflicted on them can only be a compensatory act for the humiliations of imperialism.

It is also an outdated theme. African writers over the past decade or so have turned their attention to the more urgent issues confronting their continent. All, that is, except the South Africans; it is in South Africa, after all, that the demands of history are being resisted by the forces of the old order, with predictably violent results.

On a segregated beach in Durban a black man, on one side of the fence, catches sight of a white woman sunbathing on the other. A relationship of sorts develops between them as he becomes increasingly obsessed with her and she, in turn, flirts outrageously with him. They never speak: the only time they exchange words is when they accidentally bump into each other outside a shop, and then all they do is apologize and quickly go their separate ways. That they can have anything approaching a normal relationship is impossible under apartheid.

One day something extraordinary happens. As they lie facing each other, the fence as always between them, the woman begins to move as though she were making love. He responds, and they both climax at the same time. The next day he follows her to her bungalow and stands outside watching her. She, noticing him, undresses in front of the open door and lies down on the bed. He enters and they make love — or perhaps it is better to say that they have sex — during which they are discovered and she accuses him of rape.

All this is recounted by the man as he sits in his prison cell awaiting execution. The ambiguity, for him, is whether or not he did in fact rape her; and if so, whether or not she invited the attack. Either way he does not blame her:

[She] is responsible, of course, in a way, but only marginally, symbolically, responsible. The bearer of a white skin and the bearer of the flesh and blood of a gypsy, the bearer also, if I may so add, of a curse and a wound of which, not being very bright, she was not particularly aware, this English girl has simply been an instrument in whom is revealed in its most flagrant form the rot and corruption of a society that has cut itself off entirely from the rest of humanity, from any possibility of human growth.

The woman, then, about whom we know nothing and who is perceived only through the

man himself, is a symbol of the sickness of the society. This seems to me the central problem of what is, as one would expect from Lewis Nkosi, a well-written novel. It means that the woman remains one-dimensional and the story itself wooden and unconvincing. There is no drama or conflict, no suggestion of the ambiguity which the author would have us believe to be at the heart of the book. The woman's extraordinary act on the beach, hardly ambiguous, is an extraordinary scene in itself, and raises the question as to whether there is more going on than even the writer is aware of. That the issue of rape even arises leads one to suspect that a fantasy is being acted out in compensation for humiliations endured, and acted out on the body of a white woman. Simply to rape her is not enough; she must be seen to collude in order for the rape to be given a justification it should never have had.

## Crime file

T. J. Binyon

JONATHAN GASH  
The Tartan Ringers  
212pp. Collins. £7.95.  
0 00 231428 2

*The Tartan Ringers*, latest adventure of lubricious antique dealer Lovejoy, emphasizes the difference between the reasonably raunchy original and the sanitized version shown on television. In it Lovejoy is bed-hopping in the Highlands while simultaneously preparing the biggest antiques scam of the year. Fast, inventive and funny, though the plot leaks plausibility at every seam. And since Jonathan Gash has been stuffing expertise about antiques down our throats for ten books, it's pleasing to catch him making a clanger: the contraption Lovejoy puts together on page 121 is not a bolus, or large pill, but a bolus, as employed by the Patagonian hunter.

S.F.X. DEAN  
Death and the Mad Heroin  
200pp. Gollancz. £8.95.  
0 575 03800 4

Professor Neil Kelly, S. F. X. Dean's academic sleuth, returns briefly to his native campus of Old Hampton, Mass., to find his locum, Dylan Thomas Isolator Dewi Morgan-Evans, drunk and in a spot. Ever helpful to his colleagues, Kelly carries a day or two to help Dewi's wife find out whether it was really her father who, twenty-five years ago, shot Dick Colrane through the knee with a .22 rifle and ruined his prospects of becoming the best quarter-back the NFL had ever seen. Good setting, better conversation, but plot no more reliable than Colrane's knee. Admirers of Dylan Thomas and of professorial whimsy may rate it higher.

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## Fading away

Linda Taylor

DAVID COOK  
Missing Persons  
184pp. Secker and Warburg. £9.95.  
0436 106752

Missing persons are not just the ones who run away, but those, too, who fade; who merge, seemingly vacantly, into a surrounding background. This sense of ceasing to be present informs much of David Cook's characterization in his new novel. It is the case with Edith, bigamous second wife of Frank Shawcross, who, before she married him, gave birth to his premature dead baby and who, since then, has been torpid. For decades, it seems, her only action has been to sew the cushions which are stuffed with Frank's boarded, accumulating betting fortunes. Edith spends her life in the past, rummaging through old photographs with their meaningless agglomeration of unremembered faces. She is at one with the sepia postcards, as she is with the dead plants vanquished by the chill draughts in Frank's house. She fantasizes about another (balm) world, another room: white walls, open window, a view of pine trees, where, naked and beautiful, she lies on a bed. With Frank dead, the book ends, in Italy, with just such a metamorphosis.

Wish-fulfilment in novels requires an active fairy godmother. Enter Hetty, who is the antidote to lethargy. "She couldn't sit around all day, she'd sprout, so thought up adventures for

herself." Adventure for Hetty means self-invention: she turns herself into a detective and advertises in the newspaper. She finds Frank's son by his first marriage, Bernard; finds Bernard's son, Geoffrey; and, most importantly, finds Edith, her friend, dying of hypothermia with her eighty-year-old dead "baby", Frank, in her arms.

*Missing Persons*, deals with the kind of vulgar, static, mean-minded lives (symbolized by stiff, arthritic fingers, by cracked flaky skin) that are the province, for Cook, of the petit bourgeoisie. Hetty has the impossibly uphill struggle of marginally redeeming petty lives. Through her prancing rhetoric, her "unflappable woman-of-the-world persona", Cook's ironic humour spurts and crackles.

But the reader, faced with Edith, "an ugly woman of average intelligence, who had cultivated self-pity into an emotional reassurance" with her "solid shoulders and downturned mouth", may find it hard to summon up much empathy, or to believe in the beautiful woman within the shrivelled form. Italy, where Edith makes some amends for her life by saving a child from death, where she finds her whitewashed room, is too fancifully bland to provide a sympathetic contrast to the embittered ordinariness of Westcliff-on-Sea. Edith,

it is part of the poignant comedy, of course, that Hetty should be trying to rekindle life in such a dreary landscape, and the fact that Edith never quite seems worth the effort matters less than that Cook makes one laugh so often at the complacent invisibility of the lives he portrays.



# Remainders

## Eric Korn

So I thought I'd write about Albania again. Had thought of going there, but suspect it would be more fun to let the travelographers do that for me.

I've got two of them working on it. One's a recently rediscovered document, *Travels with Zenobia*, edited by William Holtz (University of Missouri, 1983). Zenobia, I blush to tell you, is the name of the car, and Professor Holtz of U Miss or rather U Mo (as in "Me Curly, Him Larry, U Mo") has scholarly thoughts about when people stopped giving names to their cars — when they stopped representing horses or mules, more or less. With Zenobia there travelled one Rose Wilder Lane, recently in the *TLS* as author in 1916 of a fictional autobiography of Charlie Chaplin that was stylistically ahead of its time and suppressed by the unimpressed Chas. just republished by a professor at Indiana U who unfortunately wasn't let in on the joke, and one Helen Dore Boylston, who went on to write *Sue Barton, Student Nurse* (1936), *Sue Barton, Senior Nurse* (1937) and *Sue Barton, Staff Nurse* (1952) to say nothing of *Clara Barton, Founder of the American Red Cross* (1955), a striking example of a proquel. These were typically indomitable Yank ladies of the endless prelapsarian summer days before the fall of 1929, whose hearts were undoubtedly young and who had conceived this strange yen for the land of Skanderbeg, and took terrific risks in the countries of that nice Mr Mussolini ("the whole country surges with hope and pride") and that nice Mr (later King, later Mr) Zogu; they arrived in Durrës with nothing but the clothes they stood up and set down in, only one decent hat (something mind-bogglingly called a hat-trunk was lost in transit) and — of course — lashings of money.

There is more to be gleaned from Zef Mafi's *Liber Bledimesh Anglisht-Shqip* ("8 Nëntori" Publishing House, Tirana), which stands ready to talk one through a trip from "Good Morning! Hello! Goodday! I have come to the People's Republic of Albania as a member of the Workers' Delegation / Sports Delegation / Women's Delegation / Cultural Delegation" all the way to "I hope to find you even better next time with even more advanced industry / with your agriculture still more modernized and mechanized." We look at farms ("Can we see a cowshed? It is really nice"), museums ("This is the pistol of the martyr"), "There are the clothes of the People's Hero", "This is a fascist officer killed by the guerrilla units" beauty spots ("This is the building of the CC of the PLA") and schools: "It is organised on the basis of three components: lessons, productive labour, physical and military training, all of them run through by the Marxist-Leninist ideology of the People." We do not however see any churches or mosques. ("Let us go on an excursion. Shall we go outing. Do you have any churches or mosques? All churches and mosques were closed by the people in 1967"). To compensate for this we go to a bookshop ("Have you the works of Enver Hoxha?") and to a bar ("Let us drink this toast to your leader, Comrade Hoxha"). We are encouraged to ask questions: sensible questions like "what is the average wheat/maize yield per hectare?" and silly ones like "It is very tasty. What is it made of?" We ask questions that provoke answers like "On no account. No way" ("Në asnjë mënyrë") and others that evoke answers like "In the 1980 European Shooting Championships Ermeta Dingu won first place in the rifle event." "Are there any artistic activities?" "The lecturer is at your disposal for three hours." We are even given the linguistic tools for a modest but principled protest about conditions: "I want to make (I have) some complaints. I get no water from my tap. There is no light in my room. The window doesn't shut (doesn't open). The fuses have blown. The tap drips. The toilet won't flush. The WC is clogged up. No, it was very nice indeed."

It is health problems that make me anxious. We start with some straight naming of parts: face, the cheek; bërry; the elbow; fytyrë, the face — "mots de son mauvais, corripible, grosse et impudique" as Kate remarks in the course of a similar anatomy lesson, *Henry V* Act II. But at the first sign of illness among the visiting delegation, Mafi gets rattled. Strip to

the waste and lie there. There is nothing to worry about. Apoplexy. Asthma, diphtheria, skin-irritation, exocoriation; contusion of the brain, conjunctivitis, measles (fruth), tuberculosis, small-pox, sun-stroke, vertigo. Stop the machinos! switch off (Ndaloj, Ndërprishni!) I'll stay right here.

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I really shouldn't be allowed to go to auctions. I bought a copy of John Evelyn's book on salad-making, *Acetaria*, simply because of the aptness of the catalogue description: "a few leaves browned or spotted".

Then I paid too much for the fairly insignificant anonymous epistolary novelette *Letters of a Betrothed* (Longman Brown, 1858) because the association piqued me so much. It is by a certain Marguerite Power, niece to the Countess of Blessington, of whom *DNB* relates that she wrote *Virginia's Hand*, "a story in poor blank verse, evidently under the influence of Mrs Browning's *Aurora Leigh*", and this copy is given to Robert Browning "by desire of the author" by Anna Jameson, a close friend of both Brownings and, presumably, of Marguerite Power. It's signed by Robert Browning and according to the catalogue of the Browning Sale, once had a further note in R.B.'s hand, though this has been lost, filched or eroded. But the association is not just that of literary ladies or Victorian enthusiasts for marriage. On the title page Ms Power has chosen to have printed as epigraph, in, I am morally certain, all sweet innocence, one of the more scabrous double entendres from *Twelfth Night*: "By my life, this is my lady's hand! These be her very C's, her U's, and her T's, and thus makes she her great P's". A most suitable token for Robert who, as every schoolboy knows, wrote *Pippa Passes* under the impression that "twat" was an item of ecclesiastical headgear. What misconception lead him to this we cannot now ever be sure: "11 across. Every nun has one (4 letters)": something like that I suppose.

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The auction houses seem presently engaged in a competition to make the buyers squeal. Christie's of South Kensington, which has for several years enjoyed the kudos, the moral authority, of being the house that didn't charge a buyer's premium, has decided, after careful

## Afro-Caribbean controversies

### James Campbell

*Wasafiri*  
No 4; Spring 1986.  
£6 per year. 53 Cornwall Gardens. London SW7 4BG.  
African and Caribbean Voices  
ICA, July 25 to 26

"It is impossible to write in Southern Africa in an unpolitical way", remarks Alastair Niven in the latest issue of *Wasafiri*, discussing recent South African fiction. It is a sentiment which increasingly dominates all talk of not only African writing, but also "Caribbean, Asian and Black-British literature" (to quote from *Wasafiri*'s subtitle). Indeed, the reader new to the magazine is likely to get the impression that no aspect whatever of these literatures, or even of literature set in these areas, can be talked about in purely literary terms. In the same issue of the journal (which has been redesigned to make it accessible to an audience outside the Association for the Teaching of Caribbean, African, Asian and Associated Literatures for which it was founded two years ago), Paul Rich warns that "the new generation of black poets and writers has tended to reject the liberal multi-racialism of their forbears", and by the looks of it the trend is spreading: in an article on Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*, George Heron, of Manchester Polytechnic, takes the novelist to task for "inspiring 'sympathy' and 'understanding' for characters of one skin colour (white) while promoting 'the misunderstanding' of characters of other races".

And to that will soon be added, I suppose, a call for the removal of *Huckleberry Finn* and

kudoscapy and meticulous moral evaluation, that it preferred the money, and will now add 10 per cent (never forgetting VAT) to the hammer price. In exchange for which buyers will get shorter viewing hours and more extended provision for lots to be sold not subject to return.

At Bloomsbury Book Auctions they positively gloated, when I tried to report a book with a returnable fault: "Two weeks and a day! Our accountant won't hear of it." Strange things have been happening at Bloomsbury. Recently they offered for sale what was described as a presentation Edgar Allan Poe, estimated at a self-effacing £50-£75. They must have been mildly startled when the bidding reached £5,000 and perhaps equally startled when the lot was returned to them at the end of a barepoule, before you could say Arthur Gordon Pym.

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I spent a weekend instead with the Wellmans, who were celebrating the 120th anniversary of H. G. W.'s birth or the fortieth of his death or better the fiftieth of *Things to Come* (that's not *Shape of Things to Come*, but *Things to Come*: The movie as it would be called now); or better still, since we were meeting in Wells's old haunt, Imperial College, the centenary of the *Science Schools Review* which he founded, co-founded, and largely wrote for the first few issues: where *The Time Machine* made its first, curtailed, trip, though with a title like *The Chronic Argonauts* it's a wonder the machine ever got off the ground, or whatever it is that time machines get off. Bernard Crick, guest speaker at a previous meeting, described us later as sandal-shod vegetarians, but this was a simple mistake: he attended a joint meeting with the G.B.S. Society, and misattributed a lot of Shavian footgear. Wellmans come in many shapes and sizes but simple faddishness was under-represented: there were meliorists, Eurocommunists, technocrats and World Federalists, romantic pessimists who prefer Wells's end-of-tether visions to his social hygiene. There were educationists and Open Conspiracyists and men who thought that Wells could teach them how to pull birds. There were Science Fiction writers paying their dues (Arthur Clarke called him "the Shakespeare of Science Fiction"; Brian Aldiss, "the great

general of Dreamland"): there were feminists deconstructing the man and his heroines with less maenadic savagery than one might have expected, and savage thesis-hunters, some with what could fairly be called a restrictive view of the complexities of influence in English literature or British society, there to argue that voyages from Cyrano de Bergerac and Lucian of Samosata, the idea of patent medicine from Ben Jonson, that Mr Polly is the legitimate son of Pickwick and that the Sphinx in *The Time Machine* is a moth, an anima, a white whale. And — to show that Wells's unquiet spirit still has power — there was one notable absentee, Yuli Kagarlitsky, translator, critic, biographer, was at the last moment refused permission to travel. There are still a few headbangers on the road to the World Brain.

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I'm old-fashioned enough to be started by censorship, even in fashionable modern contexts. On a wall near Swiss Cottage, a demand for the banning of pornography is signed with the symbol of Anarchy. Anarchists For Censorship of the Press! And a correspondent in the *New Statesman* wrote memorably, "of course censorship has its dangers, especially in the wrong hands" (italics Milton's).

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So what do Wellmans do? They read his books and even buy them (I had scores of titles on my barrow: there were a score more they wanted, and hardly a collector to be seen); they have shared memories and shared hopes (the two most moving talks were a reading of letters to Wells from his unknown fans, and an agenda for political Wellians); they watched in sceptical rapture a special showing of *Things to Come*, a film whose stylistic glitter does not hide its fearful dialogue and ideological ambiguity; and, touchingly, we all piled into a coach for a pilgrimage to Uppark, where Wells's mother was first lady's maid and then (incomprehensibly) housekeeper, a house whose geography haunts Wells's fiction. Humphry Repton designed the tunnels where the Morlocks lurked; the windows look on the skies where Ostrog ruled and fell; Leviathan a Great House, and Utopia in an English garden.

To counter this (though not necessarily to oppose it), the Nigerian novelist Ben Okri pointed out that in his country there are roughly 250 languages: "The language that my father speaks has about 10,000 speakers, about 10 per cent of whom can read . . .". Nuruddin Farah reminded proponents of the indigenous language argument that their unlikely ally might be P. W. Botha, who had encouraged Zulu writers to use "native" languages and forms, "so that they could not be understood by the world outside".

If the act of writing is by its nature political, what about the business of publishing it? Vicky Unwin of Heinemann Educational Books — for many years the major disseminator of African literature both in Africa and in Europe — was taken aback to hear her firm criticized for maintaining a South African office (no doubt her surprise was partly influenced by the fact that Heinemann was co-organizer of the event). After someone had spoken out in favour of "books for Soweto", the floor divided on the side of the publisher. Given the fragility of the present situation it will not be surprising to find Ms Unwin updating her article in the current *Wasafiri*, in which she envisions an "exciting" future for African publishing.

*Fifty Caribbean Writers: A bio-bibliographical critical sourcebook* edited by Darryl Cumber Dance (300pp; Greenwood Press, distributed by Eurospan, 3 Hendretta Street, London WC2, £65. 0 313 23939 8) provides for each writer a brief biography, a critical appraisal, titles and a brief summary of criticism of each author's works as well as a bibliography. Among the writers included here are Audre Clark and Phyllis Shand Allfrey.

# Letters

## Cultural Property

Sir, — Lyndel V. Prott and Patrick J. O'Keefe (July 25) make a sympathetic case for dissolving posthumous copyright into a cultural heritage agreement that benefits the whole community, but in respect of literature are they not a little optimistic? The new practice, so justly complained about by Jon Silkin in the same issue, of extending posthumous copyright for a second term of fifty years by printing variant texts at a higher cost to the reader for the financial benefit of distant relatives of writers, their agents and publishers, surely runs contrary to the public interest and rewards the dead at the expense of the living author.

According to David Holbrook (July 25), authors have little to fear from copyright since they may freely use whatever they need for the purposes of "fair dealing" in literary criticism. Yet by his own account (which must by now be very much in the red) he is continually paying out these non-legal permission fees. Surely he must either make a contract that identifies his publisher as being liable for such legally invisible fees (which would help to stamp out the practice of fee-paying pretty quickly), or else shoulder the responsibility properly and refuse to pay what is not due — after which his heroic theories can be vindicated in court.

MICHAEL HOLROYD.  
85 St Mark's Road, London W10.

Sir, — In writing of the return of the Elgin Marbles to Greece Robert Browning observes that "the argument from integrity is a powerful one". Quite so. But one wonders if on the basis of this same Argument the National Archaeological Museum in Athens is willing to return to their places of origin some of the objects which it has plundered from the provinces of Greece. Would not some of the arguments for the return of the Elgin Marbles apply equally, for example, to the frescoes from Santorini?

JOHN RAISH.  
Alopekis 9, Kolonaki, Athens.

Sir, — The articles by Robert Browning and Michael Dummett (July 25) make out an overwhelming case for the return of cultural objects and other emblems of national and territorial pride to their places of origin; and they expose the weakness of the self-seeking opponents of such returns. Let us all hope that we shall soon have a general consensus and that justice will be done.

As a native of Northumbria, the old kingdom that has been plundered on a more-or-less systematic basis ever since the time of King Egbert, I should like to get in an early claim for the Lindisfarne Gospels to be returned from the British Museum. Is it too late to ask for the return of St Wilfrid's bones from Canterbury? To avoid charges of mere antiquarianism I put in a plea for the Stephensons' Rocket and other primitive locomotives in the Science Museum. Perhaps it is not too late to ask for the exhumation and return of Admiral Collingwood from Westminster.

It would be nice, too, if I could drive down to Sutton Hoo and show my children the treasures of King Redwald, who was such a good friend to us in the spacioous days before the rise of Wessex. But I don't doubt that East Anglians will have their own list of priorities.

P. M. ADLARD.

12 The Green, Seaton Carew, Cleveland.

## The Minister and the Massacres

Sir, — Nikolai Tolstoy (Letters, July 25) may be disinclined to take my word for it, but I should like to assure him that, just as the December 1985 Anglo-Yugoslav colloquium did not assemble in Brdo for the sole, primary or even subsidiary purpose of staging a pre-emptive (if highly exclusive) strike against his book, neither was ideological or historiographical uniformity a characteristic of its proceedings. Even my own innocuous paper, the drift and detail of which both seem to elude Count Tolstoy, excited some controversy, albeit on points other than those he finds offensive.

Tolstoy takes particular exception to my use of the terms "anti-communist insurgency" and "White Guards" in the title. I chose "insurgency" rather than "resistance" in order to

avoid the anti-Axis connotations of the latter word and to emphasize that much of the paper relates to the period following Yugoslavia's liberation when it possessed an internationally recognized government in Belgrade. I paired "White Guards" and "White Eagles" largely for reasons of symmetry and alliteration, as the author of *The Minister and the Massacres* might have been expected to appreciate. The term also appears in title and text because that is what this German-raised Slovene force was called by the British officials whose analyses I was discussing, as several quotations in the paper make plain.

It is, in any case, a bit rich to be accused of using loaded terminology by someone who cannot in his own book mention the Partisans without deploying some such adjective as "ruthless", whose German officers usually appear with distinguished pedigrees attached, and who now writes scornfully of people accepting invitations from "the Communist Yugoslav authorities". Are there any others? And, if not, by whom did Tolstoy want to be asked to be present so as to defend himself against Robert Knight's criticisms?

Identity of views is obviously not a prerequisite to historical debate across political, generational or methodological frontiers; but civility, a recognition of the legitimacy of alien creeds and a shared respect for certain basic historical proprieties would seem vital. Perhaps it is for the best that Count Tolstoy was not invited to Brdo.

M. C. WHEELER.

School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1.

## The Agenda Club

Sir, — Eric Korn (Remainders, July 11) appears to have overlooked one obvious source of information about the publications of the Agenda Club. The Bodleian Library's pre-1920 Catalogue has two entries under the heading "Agenda Club", one of which is the seminal enquiry into the golf-caddie problem to which Korn refers. The other has a far more sinister ring to it: "Confidential memorandum relative to the project for the organization of national (as against party) politics" it says here. Bodley's copy, an undated 20cm job, is marked as "Proof only". Of what, one can only speculate.

LOU BURNARD.  
Oxford University Computing Service, 13 Banbury Road, Oxford.

## The Melbourne MS

Sir, — When I claimed, in the letter printed in your issue of July 4, that the "Melbourne Manuscript" was written by the same hand as that of Greg's XCVd, but "not in the same year", I assumed that anyone comparing these would keep in mind that Shirley's revisions in the Worcester College MS of his *The Court Secret* were made some ten years, and perhaps even more, after he drafted *The Traitor*. I should have been more explicit, but I suppose what follows will overcome Felix Pryor's disbelief (Letters, July 18) that the "Melbourne Manuscript" is a Shirley autograph.

More samples of Shirley's differing handwriting styles have been found since the dispatch of my letter. One, of unquestionable authenticity, casts indirect light on an obscure period of his life; another proves that for *The Triumph of Peace* he was more than merely the librettist.

The first in date we owe to the efficiency of Hertfordshire County Record Office, which provided the Shakespeare Institute with a photocopy of the *Schedula Excommunicationis* discovered by A. C. Baugh (see *Review of English Studies*, VII, 1931, p.66). The *Schedula* must have been drawn up in the Archdeaconry Court of St Albans, to proceedings in which it relates, and it mistakenly describes Shirley as "Master of Arts". Shirley, then incumbent of a parish near St Albans, was required to read this publicly in his church. Below the text of the *Schedula* Shirley (here signing himself Shirley) attested, on November 10, 1623, that he had read it out, presumably on Sunday, November 9.

Shirley's handwriting in this document (no. 108 in bundle ASA 5/6 in the records of the old

Archdeaconry of St Albans) not only proves he wrote several manuscripts hitherto assumed to be "scribal copies" but also, by its characteristics, illuminates what has been the obscurest period of his career, the years between his leaving Merchant Taylors' School in 1612 and his matriculation at Cambridge in 1615. His attestation is therefore reproduced here, by kind permission of the Hertfordshire County Record Office.

*Letter for me Jacobus Shirley  
Archdeacon of St Albans  
1623.*

Comparison of its letter-forms with those on pages 77-8 of the Scolar Press facsimile of Bodleian MS Rawl poet 88 (in the Scolar facsimile of Shirley's *Poems*, 1646) or in the better reproduction in P. J. Croft's *Autograph Poetry in the English Language* (1973), nos 40-1, proves unquestionably that these pages (the manuscript's last) were written by Shirley. Croft surprisingly dismissed the rest of the manuscript as "penned by a scribe in a rather clumsy 'calligraphic' hand", adding that "Greg's note in *English Literary Autographs*, no XCV" unfortunately implies that it is autograph throughout". If Greg's note, that "the whole is calligraphic", conveys that implication, it is undoubtedly justified. Letter-forms on earlier pages in this manuscript, and the general *ductus litterarum*, have such striking similarities to those on pages 77-8, that we must conclude that the whole manuscript was written by Shirley. Pages 11-12, 17-18, 35-6, 63-5, 71-3, hold particularly significant examples of letter-forms that persist throughout the manuscript, and become progressively dominant towards its end. It seems probable that here we have a book in which Shirley entered fair copies of his poems as they were composed, and that a check on internal evidence of date, where available, would tell something, perhaps much, about Shirley's progress as versifier.

Shirley's 1623 attestation is in a fluent, elegant italic (or "Roman") hand with only vestigial flourishes, probably because the occasion made ornamentation inappropriate. His writing in the Rawlinson MS of his verse, all of which may have been, and some of which certainly was entered in the late 1630s, is much more florid, and sometimes introduces "secretary" forms of *h*, *r* and both "secretary" and "greek" *e*. All but the last two pages are heavily adorned with twirls and flourishes common in the work of a writing-master or professional scribe of the period. In all probability they signal what Shirley was doing in the years between leaving school and going to Cambridge.

From Shirley's deposition, on March 5, 1615/16, in a lawsuit against Thomas Frith, a failed scrivener imprisoned for debt, we learn that he had been Frith's "servant" (that is, employee) for "about two years"; see J. P. Feil (in *Review of English Studies*, NS VIII, 1957, pp 413-16). Feil concluded that depositions in the case "suggest that [Shirley] worked for Frith from early 1613 till early 1615", in default of precise dates, but his data could be consistent with Shirley's having entered Frith's employment in the second half of 1612. Feil inferred from Shirley's description of himself as Frith's "servant" that he might have been employed in Frith's home rather than in his shop, and appears to have taken "servant" in a modern and more restricted sense than it bore in the seventeenth century. The characteristics of Shirley's handwriting and the several varieties he wrote (in 1631, 1633 and later, he was also writing in rapid "secretary" script) suggest that while in Frith's employment he was being trained in writing a variety of scripts, and probably formally apprenticed to the scrivener, though he may have been unwilling to avow this when deposing as a student at Cambridge in 1616. Frith's imprisonment about Michaelmas 1614 (he remained there until his suicide in 1619) may not have ended this employment of Shirley, if Mrs Frith for a while carried on the purely scrivening activities of her husband's business with the aid of his apprentices. Two such apprentices made depositions in the lawsuits against Frith; Feil names them, but seems to have been incurious about their evidence. Why Shirley turned from

scrivening to the Church can only be conjectured. The content of some of his plays might encourage a guess that he found the practices of scriveners who threw distasteful, and decided that prospects for an honourable career were brighter in the Church.

I have recently come upon an example of Shirley's 1633 handwriting which puts beyond doubt, should any remain, that he wrote the "Melbourne Manuscript". It also proves that he was, as Clifford Leech surmised in his edition of *The Triumph of Peace*, "responsible for the general planning (as 'invented' on the title-pages lets us assume he was)" which Leech considered made "his achievement . . . considerable" (*A Book of Masques* . . . CUP, 1967, p. 279). This example of Shirley's handwriting is in the papers of Bulstrode Whitelocke at Longleat. Whitelocke, then merely an eminent lawyer, was a Middle Temple representative on the committees organizing this masque, in overall charge of the music as well as on the committees for the antimasques and the procession. He preserved complete accounts of expenditure on the music, and many related papers. These were studied independently by Murray Lefkowitz (*Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XVII, 1965, pp 42-60) and by Andrew J. Sabol (*Music and Letters*, XLVII, 1966, pp10-26). Both include reproductions (much reduced) of some of the "curious diagrams" J. S. Smart noticed when he first drew attention to these Whitelocke manuscripts. In *Trois Masques à la Cour de Charles I* (Éditions CNRS, Paris, 1970) Lefkowitz included, as Plates VIII and IX, larger and clearer reproductions of the diagrams shown reduced in his 1965 Plates IV and V. "The figure for the first going Vp to the state" (Plate VIII, reproduced below by kind permission of the Marquess of Bath) is unquestionably in the script found in

*Handwritten diagram from the 'Melbourne Manuscript' showing the positions of performers arranged in various patterns both in the scene and on the stage, or dancing place. Four of these 'specify the precise positions of singers and players, all named as they perform . . . the main masque'. He reproduced one of these (opp p 25) which has one or two alterations which may be by Shirley. It is possible, indeed probable, that Shirley's hand may be found in one or more of the other three not reproduced by either of these musicologists.*

The only person who could have had a hand in *The Traitor* in 1631 as well as in *The Triumph of Peace* in 1633 was James Shirley. Sabol (op cit, p 15) reports a group of items "concerned with the staging of the main masque", the most important being six "diagrams of the positions of performers arranged in various patterns both in the scene and on the stage, or dancing place". Four of these "specify the precise positions of singers and players, all named as they perform . . . the main masque". He reproduced one of these (opp p 25) which has one or two alterations which may be by Shirley. It is possible, indeed probable, that Shirley's hand may be found in one or more of the other three not reproduced by either of these musicologists.

I. A. SHAPIRO.  
Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham.

## Carlos Fuentes

Sir, — Sean French, in his review of Carlos Fuentes's *Where the Air Is Clear* (July 4), states that it is appearing now in English for the first time, translated by Sam Hileman. But I have in my library an English paperback edition of *Where the Air Is Clear*, published in 1971 by the Noonday Press, a division of the New York publishing house of Farrar, Straus and Giroux. It was translated by Sam Hileman.

Perhaps Mr French has underestimated Carlos Fuentes's importance in the United States. *Where the Air Is Clear* was something of a legend among young radicals in the US during the early 1960s when Carlos Fuentes rallied to the defence of the Cuban Revolution. The translation was eagerly awaited.

TOM GOOD.  
Apartment 23, 2802 E Osborn Road, Phoenix, Arizona 85016.



# COMMENTARY

## Art of containment

Kate Flint

William Mulready 1786-1863  
Victoria and Albert Museum, until October 12

William Mulready (1786-1863) was the only contemporary artist to be represented in the mosaic portraits by Francis Bacon Barwell for the South Kensington Museum in 1868. His genre scenes, rural idylls and solidly studied interiors, his richness of colouring which looked back to classical precedents and forward to Pre-Raphaelism, indicate the grounds on which his Victorian popularity and typicality rested. Yet, as is shown by the important bicentenary exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum, Mulready's position was achieved through a careful containment of the marginal and threatening elements of society.

Mulready's early landscapes emphasize changes taking place on the face of England. His paintings of the Kensington gravel pits, on the fringes of London, look back stylistically to the work of John Crome and his followers. As with Crome, such locations are usually populated, but rarely seen as places of work. Mulready's art is domestic, stressing the values of a nurturing environment.

The son of a skilled Irish immigrant worker, Mulready was a man who removed any disruptive suggestions of poverty and radicalism from the surface of his work, just as he kept his unhappy private life hidden behind professional honesty and integrity. Thus, for example, although the piously entitled "Train Up a Child in the Way He Should Go and When He is Old He Will Not Depart From It" was commonly referred to in private as "Lascars", any hint of controversy it might have provoked by presenting poor Indian seamen as the recipients of the child's charity, are avoided by removing them from London dockland to a healthy and timeless pastoral setting, as though they were no more than a picturesque group of gypsies. They are absorbed into a narrative of education and moral example. Yet, as Marcia Poinpoint points out in her informative and provocative catalogue (184pp, Victoria and Albert Museum, £8.95, 0 85177 057 7), it is on educational themes that Mulready is most radical. Paintings such as "A Mother teaching her Son", echoing traditional Madonna and Child poses in an English setting, can be read as contributions to the debate conducted in the late eighteenth century by the circle of radical thinkers around Godwin, whose friendship led to some of Mulready's early commissions as an illustrator. In the countryside visible through the schoolroom window in "The Last Inn", there is a hint that calm nature may be a preferable educational influence to the chaotic instruction which takes place indoors.

## The Freud Museum

Nick Isbister

Four years after the death of his daughter Anna, and nearly fifty years since he first entered the house, Sigmund Freud's last home, 20 Maresfield Gardens, Hampstead, his haven from Nazi persecution, has finally been converted into a museum. This had long been the wish of both Anne Freud and her friend and collaborator, Muriel Gardiner. The plans which they laid in their last years have come to fruition.

The Freud Museum, which was opened by HRH Princess Alexandra on July 28, promises to be not a static homage to the founder of the world's most sophisticated and dynamic psychology, but a new and living centre for the study of psychoanalysis and all that pertains to the life and work of Freud himself. With his library, his furniture (including the famous couch), his antiquities and at least the forecast of copies of the infamous, embargoed letters, there is potential here for the Museum to fulfil these initial aspirations and become a genuine focus for scholarly concern.

But there is a contradiction, too, for at the heart of psychoanalysis, as Freud himself often

Dialogues and transactions are integral to Mulready's painting. Sometimes based on playful camaraderie - children tossing cherries into an open mouth, a girl nibbling the same fruit which a young man dangles in front of her - erotic undercurrents are never far from the surface. The pastoral settings of many of Mulready's courtship scenes disguise the real social hardship of the Victorian agricultural poor and simultaneously turn sexual possibilities into a safe spectator sport for the urban middle classes. Far more shocking was Mulready's modern reworking of Petronius' *Satyricon*, "The Widow", in which the eroticism is far from innocent. Sex is linked with material transactions. The *touche* suitor attempts to woo the bereaved woman in her prosperous parlour, not only under the censorious gaze of her elderly maid and the sulky withdrawal of the widow's adolescent daughter, but against a backdrop of money changing hands in the shop behind. His potential success is hinted at through his sensuous fingering of the lapspaniel's ear, while the widow casually dangles her bunch of keys.

Poinpoint's commentary helps us to read this picture with the alertness demanded by Victorian narrative art - even the large egg hanging from the ceiling can be tentatively explained as a fertility symbol, as a sign that evil is about to be hatched, or by reference to Cowper's "Retrospect, the fatal egg by pleasure laid". Much of Mulready's popularity lay in the fact that his paintings seemed to offer a narrative while the outcome remained uncertain. Is a dismal future foreshadowed in "First Love", through the harassed housewife in the cottage behind? Is the "first love" between the young girl and her swain, or in the bond between the girl and the child she caresses?

In other paintings Mulready freezes narrative moments which raise unanswered questions about the development of the story: after a playground fight; a prosperous elderly visitor courting an unwilling peasant girl through her marginally less reluctant mother; an interrupted group of naked bathing women. In anticipating the open-ended "problem painting" of Collier and Yeames later in the century, Mulready could show himself as deliberately more suggestive than many contemporary novelists.

Mulready's use of the liminal - the view glimpsed through the open door, the large windows which reveal further action, or the freedom of open countryside - indicates the necessity of seeing each scene as part of a wider whole. More than this, it highlights, through compositional means, the degree to which his art is one of containment. While his themes may appear conventional, Mulready's narratives, through suggestion or suppression, reveal how art could be used to frame and control potentially subversive energies within Victorian society.

pointed out, there is always compromise in self-disclosure - what can be uncovered is never as much as what needs to be exposed. Freud said of his own work that he revealed "only as much as is needed to bring out a specific point", and that no one "deserved" any more. The "great revealer" was self-consciously "a careful concealer". When (to the central ambivalence over disclosure are added further constraints generated by the traditionally notorious reticence of Freud's Trustees and the conflicting functions of the Museum - a museum must preserve and conserve as much as it must display, a centre for scholarship must provide open access to material as much as it must itemize and catalogue it - that contradiction can become magnified and institutionalized.

Perhaps it has already become so? Does the hushed, ordered, subdued, one might almost say reverential, atmosphere of the Freud Museum, particularly of the Master's study, indicate the way in which we are expected to approach the great man? If it does, then should there not be, at least on the door of that room, the words once spoken by one of Freud's own phantasy-mentors, Moses, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground"?

## Love among the ruins

J. W. Lambert

Brian Clark  
The Petition  
Lyttelton Theatre

In an upper-class London drawing-room, salted in John Bury's fractured design with suitable indicators, an elderly, untidy, invalid woman, at times clearly in pain, sits drinking coffee and reading the *Guardian*. Nearby, yet significantly apart, a well-polished, even dandified old man scans *The Times* and longs for whisky. What follows in this new play by Brian Clark, author of *Whose Life Is It Anyway?*, is, among other things a copy-book example of what used to be called a "problem play"; suffused not merely with characteristic jokes but with humour, demonstrating exactly how to use the most conventional surroundings, the most identikit characters, to "set us thinking", as the saying goes.

Compared with, say, Galsworthy or Granville-Barker, *The Petition* is pared down ruthlessly. There are only these two characters (played by Rosemary Harris and John Mills) - not so much as a passing maid, and its principal subplot agents kept off-stage. The duration of the piece is precisely that of the mid-morning conversation-piece which it is: a little under two hours, embracing a lifetime of surmounted stress. Is it essentially about the two old people whose marriage has survived, despite betrayals brought painfully to light in painful retrospect? Is it about a male and female archetypal genetic clash - she the apparent victim, but actually the stronger (like Shaw's Candida, with her Marchbanks in the distant past); he, a retired general, apparently a decent enough old buffer (though, like Sassoon's, "he did for them all with his plan of attack"), crumbling before the belated discovery that his wife does not share his life of preservative regularity?

## See me, hear me

Nicholas Kenyon

Eye Music: The graphic art of new musical notation  
Serpentine Gallery, until August 31

When a sixteenth-century Italian madrigalist such as Luca Marenzio wanted to depict the rise and fall of hills and valleys, the arches of Rome or the lapping of the waves, he wrote music that expressed these things not only aurally but also visually, so that the notation of the score on the page became a symbol of the expressive aim of the piece. The word "eyes" would be set to wide-open semibreves; words like "darkness" were set in black notation. The symbolism was not always accessible to the listener. The "high mountains" of "Oh thou that tellest" in Handel's *Messiah* can be heard as well as seen, but the crucifix sign which graphically opens Bach's *St John Passion* is understandable only to someone who both looks at the score and knows the symbolism of the period.

"Eye music" is essentially a Renaissance idea which survived into the baroque, but the concept of musical notation as visually attractive in itself has a long history: in the fourteenth century, Baude Cordier bent a canonic love song into the shape of a heart, and with the expansion of traditional musical languages in this century has come a development of the means of notation. The exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery has a brief survey of historical notation - but no examples of real "eye music" - and brings together a variety of notation and artistic creations.

The only problem - one which would probably be dismissed as irrelevant by most of the creators - is deciding where the music ends and visual art begins. In some of these exhibits the score is the point; realization would be irrelevant. Dick Higgins's delightful *Clouds* (1974), in which staves and dynamics are set against a cloudy background but there are no notes at all, is more a whimsical joke about notation than a notation, as is his *The Thousand Symphonies* (1967), a printed leaf of

Or is it a sympathetic piece of anti-music propaganda (Mr Clark's personal beliefs are unnecessarily spelt out in a programme note). But then again perhaps it is a play about the power of human love - physical and, for want of a better word, spiritual - to build a strong hold against chaos?

Under the sentence of personal distress, there is, in an earth-motherly way, distressed about the future of humanity. He believes the best to be humanity's only hope, and is humbly shocked by his wife's determination to proclaim her beliefs publicly ("What will they think at the club?"). Racked between pity and grief at her plight and dismay at her unexpected views, he cracks - though only temporarily. There is no scorn, no mockery in Clark's handling of the old General's dilemma; the exposition is even-handed, whatever his implicit sympathies.

Clearly, and for all the author's skill in employing the humour of humanity and the pathos of emotional stress, these two roles present the actors with endless (and perhaps tempting) opportunities. Great tact and subtlety of apprehension are called for; and in this production they get both. Miss Harris's light-headed gift of aching stillness, Sir John's power of controlled masculine tension, are in themselves a delight to share, even in merely technical terms. Because we have seen him in roles of such emotional weight, the revelation is perhaps greater in the dapper bewilderment of the General; his power and versatility have restricted themselves too much within the scope of action. Here, behind the regulated certainties, the whole terrified little man is exposed.

Peter Hall's direction of two fine and experienced actors is exemplary - that is invisible. The audience moved effortlessly, these hands, between laughter and an empathetic, vibrant silence.

blank orchestral score with a couple of bits torn in it. William Hellermann's *To build a man* (1976), in which a paint brush trails notes its path, is an art-work using musical symbols, and is unlikely to be realized in sound. Joe Paul Curty's *Body Building* (1982), described as a body music score, is a poetic composition which contains not a single piece of recognizable musical notation.

Most of the scores, however, are instructions for music-making, however sparse and allusive they may be. John Cage's *Aria* (1958) takes us back to a pre-plaintchant concept of music with only the vaguest indications as to pitch. After this come the intricately organized graphic scores of George Crumb and Stockhausen - in particular, Stockhausen's famous score for *Refrain* (1959), with its extremely limited performer choice in the positioning of notation transparent strip that fits over the music, seems an ideally lucid mixture of visual symbol and musical result.

Friedrich Cerha's *Spiegel II* (1961-3) is an interesting transitional case of an orchestral score that looks graphic but is in fact essentially conventional; the group of electronic scores poses a different problem, that of transcribing (for one reason or another) sounds which exist primarily in non-notational form. But the central difficulty at the end of this rich and containing variety of conceptual approaches to notation remains, that you cannot understand a score without understanding the performance practice within which it is conceived and within which it is meant to be interpreted. This applies as much to a Machaut *lai*, a Handel overture or a Mahler symphony as to a Cage piece.

The text of Frank McGuinness's play, *On the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme*, first performed in Dublin in 1985 and now recently playing at the Hampstead Theatre in its version directed by Michael Attenborough, has been published by Faber (80pp, £3.95, 571 14611 2). The original production by the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, was reviewed in *TLS* of November 22, 1985.

## Sleuths and analysts

Anthony Grafton

C. O. BRINK  
English Classical Scholarship: Historical reflections on Bentley, Porson, and Housman  
243pp, James Clarke/Oxford University Press, £11.95, 0 227 68729

Inside many thick books thin books are struggling to get out. C. O. Brink's fame in classical studies rests above all on a very thick book - the trilogy *Horace on Poetry*, in which vast learning, philological acuteness and a generous literary sensibility combine to shed new light on Horace's poetry and poetics. Like Eduard Fraenkel's edition of the *Agamemnon*, the book offers far more than new texts and lemmatic commentaries - important though these are. It describes in leisurely and fascinating detail the literary backgrounds to Horace's poetry, the sources of his ideas, and the later thickets of philological commentary and aesthetic debate that have grown up around - and partly obscured - the texts. The last subject, indeed, crops up again and again, as Brink takes enormous pains both to establish the historical limitations and to recover the forgotten virtues of his predecessors. Anyone interested in the history of classical scholarship had to be fascinated by Brink's many provocative observations - and to wonder whether he would some day attack the subject more directly.

In *English Classical Scholarship* the thin book has escaped its bonds. In a series of concise and elegant essays, originally delivered in Italian at the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Brink directly confronts his greatest predecessors in the editor's art. He argues that Richard Bentley invented a new philology, "an historical science of antiquity in its major manifestations". Brink shows with energy and erudition that Bentley's mastery work on Greek and Latin metres and textual criticism formed only part - although a crucial part - of an approach to antiquity that drew on every possible form of evidence, asked every relevant question, and thus treated the ancient world as a historical whole for the first time. We follow the eighteenth-century "way from Bentley" to Porson, whose sharper and narrower brand of philology Brink describes with justice, and whose personal difficulties - his famous inability to be as consistently sober as he was conscientiously accurate - he analyses with judgment and insight. Brink manages simultaneously to praise the strengths of the Porsonians - their concentration on and mastery of Attic tragedy, their sober and modest approach to problems Bentley dealt with high-handedly - and to bring out their gradual loss of Bentley's breadth of vision. He shows that the *philologia Bentleiana* found most of its nineteenth-century inheritors in Germany, and roots the weaknesses and uncertainties of Victorian English scholarship firmly in the soil of the schools and universities where it was premised. And he traces in detail the ways in which Munro, Nettleship and Housman reimported Bentley's method to its native grounds - and, in Housman's case, honed it to a sharpness never seen before or since.

The book's title and subtitle are a little threatening - offered an equation of English classical scholarship with Bentley, Porson and Housman, the reader begins to fear that he will be served tediously familiar wares: hackneyed anecdotes about manuscripts and Fellows of Trinity, fog rising over the Backs, homilies about textual criticism as the noblest product of the human mind. Happily the text dispels these apprehensions and provides many rewards. Brink does emphasize the correction and explication of texts, but he offers powerful arguments for doing so and covers many other areas of scholarship as well. He does tell some stories that have lost their sheen from too much handling, and he does work very hard to ward off criticisms of his heroes. But he is no antiquarian or hagiographer. His protagonists are human and fallible, as is clear from the fact that he uses their lives and works to illuminate one another. This approach pays off well in his account of Bentley, which brings out interesting connections between the scholar and the university reformer. And here, as in *Horace on Poetry*, Brink recalls to light many great

feats of scholarship now little known - like Gataker's edition of Marcus Aurelius, to which he devotes a fine appreciation.

Brink's work stands out above all, however, for a slightly different reason. Most previous writers in English on the history of scholarship have had little to say about the details of their subjects' work. From Mark Pattison on, the tradition has called for elegant generalities about great works seen at a very respectful distance. Brink, by contrast, takes us down from the vista of the mine-owner's country house to the coal-face, and makes us watch the hardest critical work from very close up. We learn how critics assembled materials and reasoned about them; we are shown the genuine novelties of the great works; and we are constantly warned not to confuse clinkers with coal, or to mistake the equipment of early scholars for our own more sophisticated tools.

edition of the *Eumenides* . . . would now be considered complete" unless it drew on Müller's work. More tellingly still, he treats as obvious Müller's thesis that any study of the play must involve not only philological treatment of its language but "the mythology, antiquities, and local customs of the Greeks". And when he criticizes Müller's view on the political import of the play, he does so not because he considers tragedy unpolitical but because he has found what he considers a sounder analysis in the non-U Greek History of George Grote. The reception of Müller in England would make a complex story - one that would include not merely the 1835 Cambridge translation of his *Dissertations* (reprinted in 1853, perhaps in response to Drake), but also the *History of Greek Literature* that he wrote for an English public.

What matters about Drake's work is its ordinariness. In a commentary aimed at students

Phalaris (sixth century BC) with what Politian, Erasmus and Leibniz had already said. What he does not do, however, is to set Bentley's way of framing and answering his questions into the larger context of the history of ideas and scholarship. And this approach sometimes modernizes Bentley's work unduly.

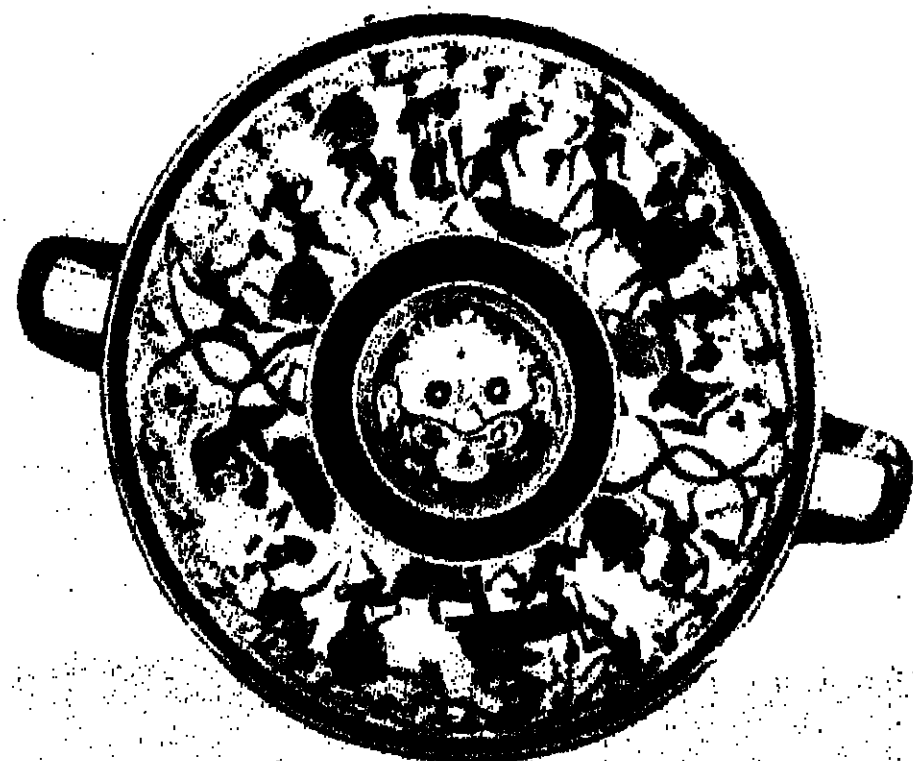
Consider, first of all, the *Epistola ad Millium* that Bentley wrote to accompany a long-postponed edition of the world chronicle of John Malalas (sixth century AD). Brink demonstrates the amazing sureness with which Bentley divined that historical truths and genuine fragments of classical Greek could be recovered from the rubble of Malalas and other late sources. But he does not stress or explain certain other points in the work: notably, Bentley's evident interest in refuting the belief that the pagans had benefited from knowledge of the true theology. Bentley shows at length that a fragment ascribed to Sophocles that criticized idolatry (and was much quoted by the Greek Fathers) could not be genuine, since it contained linguistic errors and, more importantly, since Sophocles could hardly have attacked pagan observances in a tragedy performed as part of a Greek festival. He makes fun of the *Orphica* and of those moderns who offer explanations for Orphic terms "based on the foolish trifles of the Cabalists". And he also makes fun of those "men of elegant judgment who revere the oracles commonly ascribed to the Sibyls as the real effusions of that prophetic old lady, Noah's daughter".

We commonly believe that the Victorians were the first to imagine Sophocles as an Anglican bishop who happened to write Greek (as Mr Jackson describes this superstition in *The Longest Journey*). In fact, however, this view was widespread in the Renaissance (and largely rested on patristic authority). It often formed part of the larger belief that the pagans, inheritors of their own revelation, had been monotheist sages. And it received one of its last powerful defences in the Cambridge of Bentley's youth. Ralph Cudworth, Parliamentarian, head of a house and Platonist, offered in his *True Intellectual System of the Universe* of 1678 a long argument that the extant Sibylline Oracles and dialogues of Hermes Trismegistus, though late, must correspond at least in part with the lost originals (which had in turn been the products of pagan sages inspired by God). What looked like polytheism was only "polyonymy" - the multiplication of names for a single Creator.

Did Bentley attack these ideas in the *Epistola*? One well-informed contemporary thought so. When the scholar and scientist Edward Bernard read the proofs, he wrote to Bentley that it would be better to emend the language of "those splendid laments" Bentley had denied to Sophocles than to abandon, "as unworthy of the buskined Sophocles", lines cited by "our Jynin and other orators of Christ". The correspondence - which should be read by all budding academic controversialists - was extended, detailed and unfavourably polite. In the course of it Bentley not only maintained but strengthened his convictions. He had assembled evidence to show that all the Fathers who had quoted these verses had derived them from one suspect Hellenistic source, ascribed to Hecataeus of Abdera, which the great Protestant scholar Joseph Scaliger had distinguished from the much earlier work of the real Hecataeus. He now found rich linguistic evidence to suggest that the Sophoclean fragment was a Jewish forgery - as he put it, that pseudo-Hecataeus and the author of the third Sibylline Oracle "were trained up in the same school".

No one can deny the modernity of Bentley's historical and philological method here. Indeed, to read Bernard's letters is to see what a leap of the imagination it took to imbed Greek tragedy in Greek society as Bentley did. But to read Bentley in context is also to see that his questions were less novel than his answers. In attacking the Sibyls and pseudo-Sophocles, in tracing fakes back to their Hellenistic Jewish sources, Bentley took up and continued a strong thread first spun by the great Protestant scholars of the end of the sixteenth century - Johannes Opsopoeus, whose edition of the Sibylline Oracles proved their inauthenticity by detailed historical and textual argument; Isaac Casaubon, whose short essay did the same for Hermes Trismegistus a few years later; and Scalinger, to whom Bentley explicitly

Yet on one vital point I should differ - widely, though perhaps not *too coelo* - from Brink. He compares Bentley's works with earlier work on the same subjects; thus he compares what Bentley had to say about the authenticity of the letters ascribed to the tyrant



Satyrs both picking and treading grapes, depicted on an Attic cup of the sixth century BC by the Chios Painter; reproduced from Thomas H. Carpenter's *Dionysian Imagery in Archaic Greek Art: Its development in black-figure vase painting* (143pp, with sixty-one plates, Oxford: Clarendon Press, £27.50, 0 198132220).

Like many recent historians of science - D. T. Whiteside and Martin Rudwick, for example - Brink concentrates not on rhetoric but on substance, not on praising finished products but on reconstructing the processes by which they came into being. The result is historical work of a very high level.

Naturally these stimulating essays have some gaps, at least in part as the natural result of their origins. Brink's discussion of the great seventeenth-century scholar Thomas Stanley, historian of philosophy and editor of Aeschylus, does not quite do justice either to the man or to the rich evidence about him recently assembled by J. A. Gruys. We now know that Stanley owed as much to mother wit (and miscellaneous reading) as to his anonymous helper, Bishop Pearson. More seriously, the fine chapter "Classical education and scholarship in the Victorian age", though surely correct in its outlines, may somewhat underestimate the penetration of new ideas and methods into the unreformed universities. Brink discusses the Porsonian journal of the 1810s, the *Museum Criticum*, but not the *Philological Museum* of the 1830s, where dialogues of the dead by Landor nestle cheek by jowl with articles translated from the innovative *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*.

And one will not encounter in his pages such unconventional members of the English academic élite as Bernard Drake, Drako, a Fellow of King's who died young in Madeira in 1854, stood close to the heart of the Establishment; he even served as "Captain of Montem on the last occasion (1844) of the celebration of that festival at Eton" before moving onward and upward to Cambridge. A skilful classicist, he died too soon to demonstrate real originality. Yet his edition of Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, published in 1853, begins from the most original and controversial German work in the field, K. O. Müller's famous *Dissertations* on the text and Gottfried Hermann's equally famous attacks on them. Drake begins by saying that "the



referred. The sharply philological *Epistola ad Milium*, in short, forms a direct adjunct to Bentley's *Critica sacra*; it uses the tools of a well-defined school in earlier humanism not just to reassemble fragments of the pagans but also to repair a live theological wire.

In the case of the *Dissertation on Phalaris*, to be sure, Brink paints the historical and literary background in detail. Yet even here more could be said. He does not compare Bentley's use of internal and external evidence to the classic ancient parallel (Julius Africanus' attack on the Susanna story in the Septuagint text of Daniel) or the classic modern one (Lorenzo Valla's demolition of the *Donation of Constantine*). He does not situate Bentley's work within the larger European crisis of the late seventeenth century — that time in which sceptics attacked the possibility and the value of historical knowledge and wits asserted the superiority of aesthetics to philology.

And he does not compare Bentley to contemporary scholars who worked on similar and related topics. A more elaborate treatment than Brink's might start by comparing Bentley with the Leiden scholar Jacob Perizonius, whose historical criticism Bentley much admired. Perizonius's essay on the Latin history of the Trojan War by pseudo-Dictys of Crete, a forgery of the third century AD, came out just after the *Phalaris*, in 1702; it shows a sensitivity to the habits of forgers, a concern with verbal detail and a historical erudition rivaling Bentley's own, and its argument that the Latin text was a translation from a Greek original, though controversial at the time, has been confirmed by two papyrus finds in modern times. Perizonius's essay on Quintus Curtius in 1703 brilliantly refuted Jean Leclerc's brutal critique of that very rhetorical ancient historian. He thus taught the author of the first

great *Ars critica* a lesson in critical thinking. Leclerc, Perizonius pointed out, criticized Curtius for failing to meet modern standards of historical accuracy and for inventing speeches. And such anachronistic tests could not properly be applied to the ancients' goals and methods.

They make judgments about early things on the basis of the custom of their own times, a most foolish habit. For each people and each period has its own customs, and men must follow them rather than foreign or outdated ones — just as we must accept, willy nilly, changes in styles of clothing, even if we do not like it. Nothing could be sillier, then, than to attack an author's judgment because he follows the accepted customs of his time and people.

This comparison would show that Bentley's European audience included some who could appreciate his historical arguments better than the Christ Church wits. And more comparisons, I think, would show that Bentley's attack on Phalaris had roots in earlier European scholarship. No one can deny his originality on many points, or the novelty and profundity of his knowledge of Greek literature. But no one can deny the kinship between his *Dissertation* and many other scholarly works which show the spirit of Enlightenment as clearly as the essays of the *philosophes* later on. Bentley had read and cited with respect, for example, the *Historical and Critical Dictionary* of the learned "Baile". And readers of his correspondence will find that he lived — in mind if not in body — in a highly cosmopolitan world — a transnational Republic of Letters from some of whose citizens he had much to learn. It is no accident that the first letter to Bentley that Wordsworth printed, from William Wotton, shows the two men applying to their own ends the new paleographical methods of Jean Mabillon. The *De re diplomatica* was only one

of the many powerful tools ready to Bentley's hand as he came of age.

Finally, even Brink's most novel and powerful argument for the novelty of Bentley's thought seems somewhat strained. In a well-documented and very original section, he shows that the creators of the new German philology of the nineteenth century looked back to Bentley as an exemplary figure, and praised him as ahead of his own time. Yet at least one of Brink's witnesses, Friedrich August Wolf, in fact offers quite ambiguous testimony about Bentley. True, he greatly admired Bentley's learning and wit, his critical acuteness and his physical gusto (Wolf told his Halle students that Bentley was so fat that he had to use two seats when he rode the post coach). He summed up the problem of Phalaris' letters in terms that left no doubt about his views: "This wild rascal wrote 148 humane letters." And he described Bentley's quarrel with Boyle, the young editor of Phalaris, in terms that left no doubt about the side he favoured: "Instead of boxing [Boyle's] ears, Bentley wrote that the things were all forged." Yet in summing up the merits of the *Dissertation*, Wolf explicitly described it as a brilliant synthesis of traditional components: "he applied together, in a masterly way, all the arts that earlier scholars had applied in isolation to similar problems". He thus called attention, as Brink says, to "the bond which unifies the activities of this one man"; but he also pointed to the earlier origins of many of these activities. And while I fully agree that Bentley's reception in Germany provides vital evidence for the interpretation of Bentley's work, I would also argue that we must take advantage of every hint the Germans give us — however complex, and even messy, the picture that results from doing so.

Even Brink's fine treatments of Bentley as Housman as editors could also be enlarged. One would like to hear more of Bentley's confrontation with the great sixteenth-century tutor of Terence, Gabriele Faerno, whose work he reprinted with his own. Much of Bentley's commentary reads like a dialogue with this distant predecessor, and though his comments are hardly pious ("poor old Faerno, he often scanned his verses not with his ears but on his fingers"), they also show how much he profited (and Bentley is not always right when they disagree). And one could imagine a treatment of Housman less severely internal — one that rigorous logic to pull startling conclusions from puzzling evidence. The trio recently analysed by Carlo Ginzburg in a brilliant essay — Frank Morelli, Sherlock Holmes — would make a good starting-point, and Father Brown might prove relevant as well. But these chapters, I must be said, are enormously rewarding as they stand. No one has conveyed so well, in non-technical language, how great an editor Wolf was.

In the end, the *Epistola* and *Dissertation* firmly resist full analysis until they can be read in modern editions on the model of the splendid recent Cambridge presentations of Nietzsche on Tragedy and Kepler against Ursus. And the complex problems Brink has raised would require a thick book — a book richly informed about sources and as sensitive to nuances of style as *Horace on Poetry* — to do them full justice. Meantime we can use, and must give thanks for, these lean and lucid essays, the noble work of a scholar who has read much and thought hard about the history of his discipline.

## Robbing-room reminiscences

Patrick Devlin

MICHAEL GILBERT (Editor)  
The Oxford Book of Legal Anecdotes  
328pp. Oxford University Press. £12.50.  
0192141120

The Oxford Book of Legal Anecdotes, which came out in 1975, was an immediate and an immense success. So it was to be expected that the publisher, when looking around for successors, should cast his eye upon the legal profession. For the legal profession — or at any rate the more exposed part of it, which is the Bar — harbours a huge store of anecdote. Barristers congregate for lunch and dinner at the Inns of Court and in circuit messes. They also spend a lot of time waiting for their cases to come on, time which they pass in talk. Trained as they are in the art of oral composition, they find that anecdotes easily take shape on their lips, where they are improved, polished and exchanged. Their professional fluency puts them in demand for after-dinner speeches, where the legal anecdote is always welcome. A selection of them is as much a social asset of the young barrister as the sheets of music which the Victorian maiden happened to bring with her to the evening party.

The natural milieu of the anecdote is conversation", as the editor of the Oxford Book of

Literary Anecdotes justly observed. Nevertheless, the pen is for the literary man the proper instrument for the perpetuation of thought. So the mature literary anecdote sooner or later finds its home in print, and it was from such sources that the earlier selection was made. Michael Gilbert has in this book taken the same course. But what is sauce for the literary profession is not sauce for the legal. The great corpus of anecdote in the legal profession is still moved around by word of mouth. Only a small fraction of it has been committed to paper, mainly by the few judges, barristers and their clerks who have idled away their retirement by writing their reminiscences. I dare say that Mr Gilbert found himself with no alternative. He is, of course, nearly as well known as a solicitor as he is as a writer of crime stories. But only a barrister has easy access to the tales that go the rounds.

The consequence is that The Oxford Book of Legal Anecdotes, starved of its natural nourishment, can offer to the reader only what can be coldly furnished forth from the refrigerators of print. Take, for example, the case of Theo Mathew, the greatest legal wit of my time. He employed some of his leisure in light historical research and published the fruits in *For Lawyers and Others*. Four delightful extracts are in the present volume. It is not for this, however, that he is famous, but for his ready comments on current events. He was one of the first to appear before Sir Ernest Pollock, whose appointment as Master of the Rolls had

been widely and unfairly criticized in the Temple as a political job. "Disappointingly good", Mathew reported; the verdict has often been used since in the case of an unexpected elevation. When a conviction before the Lord Chief Justice was quashed in the Court of Criminal Appeal by three of his puisnes, Justices Charles, Humphreys and Du Parcq, there was much speculation as to who had been the ringleader in belling the cat. "There was no leader", Theo said firmly, "they shared it out. Humphreys wrote the judgment, Charles delivered it and Du Parcq was sent round to apologize."

Lord Bowen's most celebrated witticism, now a century old but still fresh, qualifies for inclusion because it was privately printed. There is missing his comment on Mr Justice Kekewich, "that he had all the virtues of a judge of first instance, he was quick, courteous and wrong". This is a pity, since it would have led to the explanation by Lord Asquith (from whom there is nothing) that, when Lord Bowen said that, he did not mean to imply that the Court of Appeal was slow, rude and right, because then they would have been usurping the functions of the House of Lords.

Mr Justice Swift was the most colourful judicial character in the first half of the century. Fortunately there are two biographies of him. But there is only a casual reference to Mr Justice Stoble: nothing about his dog on circuit nor about the adventures of his butler, Peever, nor about the juror whose wife was going to con-

ceive that afternoon. There are now many stories in circulation about Mr Justice Melford Stevenson; but they, I suppose, must await mortification.

On the whole, the legal anecdotes are not so well fashioned as the literary; reminiscers are after all amateurs. Moreover, some of the legal are subject to a peculiar handicap. The presence of ladies has until recently generally been thought to require some purification of the anecdote. This was never so at the Bar. Lady barristers were from the first expected, like Lady Macbeth, to call on the spirits "that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here": heavily outnumbered, they complied. But when in 1964 a reminiscer, G. D. Roberts, QC, sought to put into public print, in his book *Law and Life*, what the professional ladies had had to tolerate, it was evidently thought to be going too far. The consequence is that the versions printed in the anecdotes numbered 209 and 301 are much more restricted than those in circulation. Since it is now 1986, it is perhaps permissible to say that the publisher's inability in 1964 to refer to bulls and buggery respectively destroys the pith of each anecdote. A different misfortune strikes anecdote no 348; it is not about the late Lord Upjohn, as alleged, but about his more anecdotal father.

The book is within its limitations a neat job but it is not the definitive work. By way of compensation, however, the jacket illustrates a collection of legal faces from *Vanity Fair*, 1891, each of which is an anecdote in itself.

## Designs for divinity

Martin Henig

NIELS HANNESTAD  
Roman Art and Imperial Policy  
485pp., with 201 black-and-white and three colour illustrations. Aarhus University Press.  
410 Kr.  
8772880430

This book is an ambitious attempt at relating developments in Roman art to the changing political structure of the Empire. In its basic outline the story has frequently been told before, but seldom with such zest and conviction as Niels Hannestad brings to his narrative. Moreover, by laying emphasis on symbolism, on abstract concepts such as *concordia*, *pax* and *libertas*, and on the devices shown on coins, he is able to escape the straitjacket imposed by the production (and survival) of State Reliefs, most of which were carved within a period of a century and a half from the reign of Domitian to that of Septimius Severus.

Hannestad is at one with other scholars in seeing social and economic realities reflected in Roman art, but decidedly at odds with the prevailing fashion in placing the Emperor at the very centre of the stage and interpreting many of the changes which took place as reflections of his will. Of course the author is not tempted into a disappointed and superficial view of Imperial history as a simple succession of "good" and "bad" emperors, but he does emphasize that what Augustus or Nero or Septimius Severus believed was reflected in art and came to influence the perceptions of their successors.

Thus the splendid bronze coin of Nero which graces the cover of *Roman Art and Imperial Policy* was an aggressive attempt at advertising a popular Hellenistic-style monarchy. Both the portrait itself and the use of a relatively low value denomination show this. Nero's triumphant return from the East carried within it the seeds of the late antique *Adventus*; such splendid theatre was not intended for the Senate, which hated it and damned Nero's memory.

The art of Trajan's reign was designed to a very different end. It certainly does not express the personal compromise of Nero (or Hadrian) but was used as never before to extol the ruler as a warrior and as the father of his

people. The military virtues of the *Optimus Princeps* on Trajan's Column look forward to the aspirations of the soldier emperors of the third century; on the Great Trajanic Frieze, he tramples barbarians like a heroic Alexander the Great. It is scarcely surprising to find such *virtus* (not the prerogative of an ordinary citizen but, as the title *Princeps* implies, of a being different in kind) appealing to Constantine, who incorporated the panel in his arch.

Hadrian, Trajan's successor, eschewed such bloodthirsty renown: "Where Trajan saw Caesar as an ideal, Hadrian looked back to the Augustan period." His consolidation of the Empire, and his concept of it as a single state coterminous with civilization, were lofty ideals to which coins, medallions and sculpture gave expression, but even his return to gentler values was accompanied by features which other emperors would adopt with very different effect, the hunts on the tondi re-used on the Arch of Constantine look forward to Commodus as Hercules, as he appears on the famous bust in the Conservatori Museum, while the Antinous figures (we surely do not need to adopt the dark implications suggested by Hannestad) and the extraordinary *Hadrianus Renatus* head point the way to the close identification of emperors and saviour gods from Septimius Severus to Constantine.

If what emperors did mattered, the general progress from the notable man (in the Republic) to the Augustan *Princeps* and ultimately to the man-God (at the time of the Tetrarchy) seems inescapable. Despite the fact that emperors could (and did) influence the style of artistic patronage during their reigns, the course of development described appears so relentless that the reader must wonder whether the final result would have been any different if rulers of a very different stamp had held power. Hannestad does not try to answer this question but points out that many emperors were competent managers through whom government could be carried out; a few were of sufficient intellectual stature to initiate changes; others were disasters to the State. The manipulation of slogans on the coinage or in sculpture reflects conscious decisions, and the path by which *libertas* became the same *assuetudo*, or the Imperial *Adventus* took on the character of the epiphany of the Sun god, were not predetermined.

It is refreshing to have such an intelligent and well-written account of those very works of art which are most studied by students, who often have the greatest difficulty in discerning a pattern behind their development. The choice of illustrations is interesting and the endnotes are frequently as illuminating as the text itself.

I have only two real criticisms. The first concerns Hannestad's understanding of Roman religion. He is superlatively good on such anthropological observations as the Roman penchant for head-hunting, yet he has difficulty in believing that the Romans truly believed in their gods, or in the Imperial cult, before the advent of the oriental mysteries. Indeed, should such a distinction between the Saviour faiths and other aspects of Roman religion be made at all? If we are prepared to accept that Roman religion at all times had a real impact on the emotions, we can look at many of the works of art discussed in this book, especially in the earlier parts of it, as rather more than propaganda. Trajan and his countrymen probably really did believe that Jupiter helped them in battle; the epithet *Optimus Princeps* thus truly acquires a religious aura, the Emperor as the earthly substitute for Jupiter Optimus Maximus in the heavens.

Second, in a book which deserves much credit, something should be done about the weak spine and poor-quality binding in future editions, for this is a work which must become a classic in the literature of Roman politics as much as in that of Roman art.

## Rescued from conjecture

J. H. C. Leach

PIERRE GRIMAL  
The Dictionary of Classical Mythology  
Translated by A. R. Maxwell-Hyslop  
603pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £22.50.  
0631 132090

This substantial and attractive book should be warmly welcomed. A. R. Maxwell-Hyslop's translation of *The Dictionary of Classical Mythology* by Pierre Grimal, originally published in French in 1951, is a work at once authoritative and complete. Anyone who has ever lost his way in the complex genealogies of the Greek gods and heroes will value the forty genealogical tables; scholars will appreciate the superbly detailed references to the ancient sources for each entry; as well as the helpful (and modernized) table of sources, in which care has been taken to list the editions which are most easily accessible for English readers (especially, and relevantly, the Loeb Classical Library), and there is a full index. A short bibliography would have been welcome. The black-and-white illustrations are copious and pertinent.

My sampling of the entries and references found an impressive standard of accuracy; the generous cross-referencing given makes

browsing an almost mandatory pleasure, and will indeed be a learned reader who does not find something he did not previously know on almost every page. On page 5, indeed, will be found the answer to the famously "puzzling question" of Sir Thomas Browne concerning the "name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women", and if this *Dictionary* can tell us "what song the Syrens sang", yet at least we are given the information that they were originally a duo, who later became (variously) a quartet and a trio — who respectively played the lyre, sang and played the flute — and could perform celestial harmonies.

Etymologies are sensibly not attempted; but a useful feature is the appearance in Greek type of all relevant names next to the anglicized version, and my sampling found only one error in the Greek (under *Haemon*): Maxwell-Hyslop has mercifully retained the traditional English spellings (Achilles rather than *Akhilleus*).

For a long time there has been a need to replace the useful but very outdated *Classical Dictionary* of Lempière. For factual and historical matters this was done years ago by the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*; and, with the publication of Pierre Grimal's *Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, Lempière can finally be relegated to the shelf reserved for books which have honourably outlived their usefulness.

E. S. Turner

SIDNEY KIRKPATRICK  
A Cast of Killers  
230pp. Hutchinson. £10.95.  
0091670802

It is not unknown for a writer to embark on a sober project and then find himself sidetracked on to something far more diverting. Sidney Kirkpatrick, an American journalist, was working on a biography of King Vidor, the film director of breeches-and-riding-crop days, when he found that all records of what Vidor had been doing in 1967 were missing from an otherwise over-documented life. Searching the recesses of the director's three homes, he eventually turned up a strong-box full of papers.

In fact Vidor, then in his seventies, had been foretelling the truth about the "unsolved" murder, in 1922, of the English-born Hollywood director William Desmond Taylor, an event he hoped to turn into his fifty-fifth film. The affair had been a reliable fount of scurrility in its day and had broken the acting careers of Mabel Normand and Mary Miles Minter, names once posted on every far-flung fleapit.

Who killed Taylor? The index says: "Paramount Pictures, possible involvement in murder", but the company did not order the slaying; its executives merely "hightailed it" to the scene and made off with bundles of the dead man's letters, a normal act of prudence. The total of suspects rose to 300, including the two actresses named, the mother of one of them, the dead man's brother, his secretary, bootleggers, drug-pushers, blackmailers, an aggrieved soldier and a couple of hitch-hikers. The victim's houseman was in trouble for soliciting boys in the park, seemingly not for himself. This was the Hollywood that was trying to live down the Fatty Arbuckle scandal, but the smell of rotting morals could still be detected far out to sea.

Kirkpatrick dropped his biography and began writing this brisk account of how Vidor set about cracking the murder riddle. The director had left copious notes of interviews with survivors, even partly written scenes. A cynic might express surprise that a Hollywood director should go to such extravagant lengths to get his facts right. Vidor was helped by the police, whose files he surreptitiously copied in a private room. Encouraging him was his old flame Colleen Moore, another great fleapit name, by then a financial power of such standing that when in Britain (says the author) she stayed at a Scottish castle "where British royalty kept a

suite of rooms reserved for her visits" (Balmoral? Castle of Mey?). The murderer was not all that hard to spot; the real mystery was why the police had made no arrest. Officers who appeared to be making progress were taken off the case. This, after all, was the City of (Fallen) Angels. It was well-known that the studios were capable of anything. Not only did they whisk away those letters, they possibly planted "evidence" to give a more acceptable idea of the dead man's habits. Their publicity departments were well used to pumping out falsehoods. In happier days Taylor had been represented as a hero of the First World War, an ace pilot and so forth, whereas in fact he had joined up too late to serve anywhere but in Hounslow and Nova Scotia. His father was supposed to have been a major in the British Army. On page 133 he is a sergeant-major (which seems more likely) but in the index he is major again.

Hollywood was infested by people who had changed their names, not always for good reasons. Before going West, Taylor, then called Tanner, had walked out on a wife and a prosperous business in New York. One night his ex-wife, who had divorced him, took her daughter to the cinema to see *Captain Alvarez* and noticed that the star had a familiar face.

What mars Kirkpatrick's *tour de force* is the inclusion of non-significant detail in the worst "Insight" manner. Vidor is for ever showering and shaving. He eats his Cream of Wheat with honey, washes his breakfast dishes, then dresses for the day. He goes to a poker game, "stopping off along the way for a six-pack of Budweiser". But some of the detail is fascinating enough. It is gratifying to know that in 1979 Vidor (who made *North-West Passage*, *Duel in the Sun* and *War and Peace*) won an Honorary Academy Award for Life Achievement, which must be a good thing, but sad to learn that his estranged wife left her estate to her dog, which outlived him for two years.

the late eighteenth century that they showed a sustained rise. Curiously, in urban Surrey too, the 1720s apart, it was only in the later eighteenth century that property offences occurred in large numbers. Other felonies were very rare.

Beattie's treatment of punishment also adds to our understanding of eighteenth-century developments. The main theme here is the growth in the belief that the criminal code was too severe, and the search for effective lesser punishments than hanging. In 1660 benefit of clergy and whipping offered alternatives, but by 1720 had been largely overtaken by transportation to the American Colonies. This in turn attracted criticism, and after 1775 ceased to be an option anyway. Transportation to Australia, begun in 1787, was too expensive, and logistically impossible given a sharp rise in the number of convicts. Accordingly, by the late eighteenth century *ad hoc* experiments with imprisonment were coalescing into something like a system, and the reformation of the offender joined deterrence as one of the objectives of punishment.

Some of these themes are familiar, but Beattie's work adds much detail to them and provides important new insights. His handling of the manorial or ecclesiastical courts might have been doing, a pity, given that the post-Restoration ecclesiastical courts in particular are in urgent need of investigation. More surprisingly, he has little to say, apart from maintaining a fairly straightforward dichotomy between rural and urban (ie, London suburban) Surrey, about local variations within his two counties. Other county studies have suggested that detailed examination of such variations can provide fascinating insights into the nature of crime and its control in early modern England.

Beattie, like anybody writing on this subject, has been obliged to set himself limits, and within these his work could hardly have been better. His main focus is on "mainstream" offences (theft, burglary, rape, coining, homicide and infanticide) and how these were treated in the courts. His findings on the pattern of offences over time flesh out our earlier knowledge. Homicides dropped steadily in number, in Surrey from 2.5 per 100,000 of population in the post-Restoration period to a mere 0.3 around 1800. Property offences, by far the most frequently indicted of felonies, present more problems of analysis. Rural Surrey and Sussex experienced a falling away of indicted property offences after 1660, and it was only in

the immensely rich materials at his disposal is superb, and he maintains an effective prose style over nearly 650 pages of detailed argument studded with numerous graphs and tables. His book is a formidable achievement.

The recently published *The Law of Tort: Policies and trends in liability for damage to property and economic loss*, edited by Michael Furmston (231pp. Duckworth. £29.95. 0 7156 2012 6) is a collection of papers which were presented at the University of Bristol in 1984 under the auspices of the Colston Research Society. Twelve scholars from England, the United States and the Continent contributed and they examined, from a wide range of perspectives, the present state of the law and its likely future development. Chapters include K. M. Stanton on "The recovery of pure economic loss in tort: the current issues of debate", Robert L. Rabin on "Characterisation, context and the problem of economic loss in American tort law", Richard L. Abel on "Should tort law protect property against accidental loss?", Peter Cane on "Contract, tort and economic loss" and Paul Burrows on "Corrective justice and concessions to efficiency in the law of nuisance".

The Inheritance



# The earthy and the unearthly

## Gerald Mangan

JAMES HOGG  
Tales of Love and Mystery  
Edited by David Groves  
216pp. Edinburgh: Canongate. £9.95.  
0862410851

MARGARET OLIPHANT  
Selected Short Stories of the Supernatural  
Edited by Margaret K. Gray  
257pp. Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press.  
£8.50.  
0707304784

Although little of his work touches the level of inspiration sustained in *The Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824), James Hogg produced a great deal that has weathered just as well. Much of it was for long unavailable; but new editions of the shorter prose-works have recently amplified his reputation. For this new selection, David Groves has unearthed six stories and two poems – mostly out of print since Hogg's lifetime, or howlerized by Victorian editors – that demonstrate the range and vigour of his writing throughout his career. Much of the shorter prose-works have recently amplified his reputation. For this new selection, David Groves has unearthed six stories and two poems – mostly out of print since Hogg's lifetime, or howlerized by Victorian editors – that demonstrate the range and vigour of his writing throughout his career.

The centrepiece, "The Love Adventures of Mr George Cochrane" (1810), is a novella from the year of transition, when Hogg left his flock behind to seek his fortune in literary Edinburgh, and met with the same condescension that had dispirited Burns a generation before. When serialized in his own magazine *The Spy*, this farcical and semi-autobiographical account of rural courtships was found "shameful and indecent" by the capital's genteel critics, whose attitude ensured the magazine's collapse.

The offence seems to have derived from the story's revelation of ancient Border customs, which permitted midnight trysts in farmhouse bedrooms, although the narrator's ineptitude and ill-fortune prevent any consummation of the kind frankly celebrated in Burns's *The Merry Wives*. Writing as an elderly bachelor, in a tone of rueful self-deprecation, Cochrane recounts a succession of abortive affairs in order to explain his wifeless condition. The longest episode involves him in a series of wrestling matches, which fail to prove his mettle to a shepherd's daughter; and a pious lady inflicts the final defeat, when he refuses to mount the stool of repentance for previous sins. Each of the women is richly characterized – dauntlessly spirited, and gracefully articulate – and each of the episodes conveys a wealth of information on local mores and theology. In its outspoken distaste for religious fanaticism, and by its inclusion of an incident which obliges Cochrane to assume a dual identity, the whole tale clearly adumbrates the *Confessions*; and Groves's introduction makes a plausible case for reading it as an implicit satire on Scottish sectarianism.

Hogg often played up to the caricature of rustic genius which "Christopher North" made of him in his *Noctes Ambrosianae*, but he was in fact shrewd and self-confident. This selection reminds us that country matters, in every sense of the term, remained at the root of his generous moral vision; and that his Scottish voice was always more supple than his English. The Oriental fable "Eastern Apologues" adopts a rather tired Johnsonian formula to demonstrate the tawdriness of material values; and there is a similar uncertainty of tone in the poem "The First Sermon", whose Anglified narrator gloats over the downfall of a pompous young minister. By contrast, in "Seeking the Floudy" (1830), a mysterious tale of a nightmare journey in search of a midwife, the Lowland Scots tongue is given its full head when the big-ridden horseman takes the reins of the narrative. Hogg displays the shrews of his imagination here, and its sources in what he called a "primitive and original" tradition.

During a career spanning almost half a century, Margaret Oliphant (1828–97) published a prodigious body of fiction which included, among ninety or so other novels, *The Chronicles of Carlingford* and *Kirkcaldy*. In her intro-

duction to six of Oliphant's supernatural tales, Margaret K. Gray portrays a strong-willed literary workhorse, widowed in her youth, who was obliged to support a family of ailing and feckless menfolk. Her fluent but undistinguished prose often betrays her need to calculate income by the paragraph; too many paragraphs demand to be skimmed ("Time flew by on gentle wings . . ."); and her recourse to the traditional Gothic properties too often recalls Peacock's parody in *Nightmare Abbey*: gloomy mansions, dusty portraits, secret chambers, crotchety patriarchs and romantically susceptible youths are here in abundance, and in exhaustive detail.

In "Earthbound" (1880), a weak-minded youth is unwittingly infatuated by a beautiful

## Less than deathless

### S. S. Praver

GREGORY A. WALLER  
The Living and the Undead: From Stoker's "Dracula" to Romero's "Dawn of the Dead"  
376pp. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press. \$28.95.  
0252012089

This book by an American academic is hard going. Relieved by few felicities of phrasing, innocent of even the slightest touch of humour or irony, it plods dully along, dragging its readers through one laborious analysis after another of versions of the Dracula story, in sub-literature, the popular cinema, and television.

At times it reads like a parody of what used to be called the "New Criticism"; the kind of loving attention that Cleanth Brooks used to give to poems by Wordsworth or Keats is now bestowed on works by Dan Curtis and John Badham; classic status is accorded to Terence Fisher, and Stephen King becomes a culture-hero. Did Q. D. Leavis know what she was starting when she took her close but severely critical look at popular narrative in *Fiction and the Reading Public*? It is fashionable to sneer at the Leavises' "elitism" and excessively narrow bounding of a "great tradition"; but their Arnoldian concern with standards and touchstones is surely due for a revival in face of the

apparition. In "The Secret Chamber" a nervous noble squirms under the thumb of the family demon; and in "The Portrait" an irresolute heir falls under the spell of his dead mother's portrait. The spinelessness of Oliphant's male characters must have had its origins in experience; and the hint of sternness in her tone often combines with a vein of implicit snobbery. When an aitch-dropping family of *nouveaux riches* in "Old Lady Mary" pride themselves on having acquired an upper-class ghost along with their rented manor, she misses the opportunity for comic relief. Her spectres are all notably well-heeled according to the convention, and invariably reluctant to reveal themselves to the lower orders.

The stories are more interesting when she

expands the conventions to embody her personal theology. In one case, the central character is the dead woman herself, on a ghastly mission to right a previous wrong, and its idea of purgatory is developed at length in "The Land of Darkness" – a vivid nightmare inspired by Dante, which unfortunately collapses under the ponderous weight of her prose. The best of them, and the only one previously reprinted, is "The Library Window" (1896), in which a girl grows enamoured of a mysterious figure, glimpsed behind a bricked-up window across the street. Although tortuously hesitant, in a rather late-James manner, its evocation of troubled adolescence shows a certain delicacy of perception, not unworthy of *The Turn of the Screw*, which it anticipates by two years.

mysterious glances, expressions of fear or pleasure, and so on); zoom-outs to begin sequences; wide-angle shots used to make ordinary sets appear distorted and extraordinary; and predictable, poetic music and sound effects that announce and underline every image and action that is even remotely dramatic and suspenseful. Franco's style depends on techniques associated with television commercials, and, though *El Conde Dracula* lacks the sophisticated sense of visual design, the security continuity, and the "invisible" editing of the best television commercials, the film is out to manipulate emotions, to relieve us of the responsibility of making choices, and to limit our vision as much as any imaginative advertising campaign.

In his discussion of Murnau's *Nosferatu* Waller rightly speaks of the dual face of Bremen that film: "the familiar, easily traversed town that Jonathan Harker leaves when he embarks on his business trip to Castle Dracula, and the larger, more complex, and eminently vulnerable city that the vampire and his rats journey to and infect". What the author has here isolated (though he does not say so) is a variation of the *Doppelgänger* theme that could bear further analysis. It should be said, however, that the name of the actor who plays the "Jonathan Harker" figure in Murnau's film is "von Wangelheim" and not "von Wagenheim", as this book asserts in three places – just as poor John Van Eyssen, who plays Renfield in the Hammer *Dracula* of 1958, appears three times as "Van Eysen". Welcome too is Waller's defence of Tod Browning's *Dracula* of 1931 against the often-repeated charge of staginess, and his rescue of Herzog's flawed but interesting variation on Murnau's *Nosferatu* from the grip of German critics like Rolf Giesen, who tells readers of his widely-used *Lexikon des phantastischen Films*:

In 1978 the film-maker Werner Herzog, with American assistance, tried his hand at a new version of (Murnau's) film: *NOSFERATU PHANTOM DER NACHT*, starring Klaus Kinski in the title-role, with Isabelle Adjani and Bruno Ganz. Forget it!

Best of all is Professor Waller's study of Romero's *The Night of the Living Dead* in terms of Freud's myth of the primal horde and Le Bon's study of crowds – though it may well be felt that throughout his book he is far too uncritical towards the psycho-anthropology of *Totem and Taboo* and that he takes too little account of psychology after Freud and sociology after Tönnies. It is also significant, in this connection, that when he discusses society's attitude towards madness and the mad – a theme of considerable importance in vampire stories since Bram Stoker's *Dracula* – his authority is Szasz rather than Foucault.

Waller's analysis of *The Night of the Living Dead* and its inexorable movement towards despair shows the pointedness and incisiveness of which he is capable, but which surface all too rarely in his book:

Ben's death is the final stage in this movement, after Romero has shown us the failure of tradition and religious faith; the incompetence of the Federal Government, civil defense authorities, and the news media; the inadequacy of communal action and romantic love; the self-consuming destructiveness of familial ties; and the vulnerability of the private home.

What it had all been at this level! But occasional passages like those I have quoted do suggest that under all the verbiage there is a good slim book, or a good long essay, scribbled to be let out, and that we may yet hope the livelier words from Professor Waller's word processor than *The Living and the Undead*.

MARION LOMAX

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# For the fallen

## Lucy Newlyn

BARBARA KIEFER LEWALSKI  
"Paradise Lost" and the Rhetoric of Literary Forms  
376pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press.  
£26.25.  
0891066426

RICHARD J. DUROCHER  
Milton and Ovid  
241pp. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.  
£30.25.  
0801418127

CEDRIC C. BROWN  
John Milton's Aristocratic Entertainments  
210pp. Cambridge University Press. £25.  
0521304407

R. A. SHOAF  
Milton, Poet of Duality: A study of semiosis in the poetry and the prose  
225pp. Yale University Press. £17.  
0300333435

PAUL STEVENS  
Imagination and the Presence of Shakespeare in "Paradise Lost"

270pp. University of Wisconsin Press. £30.  
0299104206

DUSTIN GRIFFIN  
Regaining Paradise  
299pp. Cambridge University Press. £25.  
0521309131

It is a measure of Harold Bloom's powerful influence on literary criticism that four out of six recent studies of Milton should define their methods against his. Thirteen years on from *The Anxiety of Influence*, Barbara Lewalski declares that though she focuses on Milton's "engagement with literary precursors" she does not find it "characterized by anxiety, struggle, transumption, or triumph". Richard J. DuRocher, in a much-needed book on Milton and Ovid, is more ambivalent. A spirit of "admiring antagonism" is an essential part, he argues, of the Milton-Ovid relationship. But in place of anxiety, he offers confident openness: "Milton repeatedly invokes yet criticizes Ovid while inviting the earlier poet to act upon, even to transform, his epic argument." For Paul Stevens, examining Shakespeare's presence in Milton, allusion is not "transumptive" but "typological"; the poet's concern is "not so much poetic revision as divine revelation". And to Dustin Griffin, updating R. D. Havens's survey (1922) of Milton's influence on the eighteenth century, the idea of Oedipal "anxiety" seems absurd. The achievement of Milton "did not lessen the opportunities" of those who came after him, he insists: "Indeed, in some ways it increased them, for his work was now available, through imitation and allusion, for their use."

But anxious Miltonists have two covering cherubs to contend with, not just one. If Harold Bloom "glides meteorous" – an ambiguously satanic archangel – denying their access to Eden on the left, Stanley Fish, brandishing the sword of God before them, stands on guard to the right. *Paradise Lost* (rather than *Paradise Itself*) is at stake, and fighting one precursor could mean yielding to the other. But it seems that a choice must be made. Is the text controlled, as Fish would argue, by an omniscient narrator, who betrays the reader into fallen assumptions as part of a humiliating programme of education and reform (*Surprised By Sin*, 1967)? Or alternatively (as Blake and Bloom would see it) are fallen implications celebrated, by narrator and reader alike, as the defeat of Our Great Forbidding Reason (the ego) by Desire (the id)? Choosing between these opposite readings is especially fraught when the critical discussion centres either on Milton's own habits of allusion, or on Miltonic allusion in others. For it is in the process of alluding that choice presents itself as such, both to the poet and to the reader. Christopher Ricks saw this clearly; if not first. Writing of the moment when Satan is compared with Jesus, in *Paradise Lost*, Book Three, he commented: "The length and power of the allusion force us to choose between damaging irrelevance, or 'likeness' turning grimly into disparity" (*Milton's Grand Style*, 1963). A further option is to see disparity turning suggestively into likeness. In Fish's terms, this last might be regarded as an educative temptation. In Bloom's, it is at once the poet's

strong misreading of the Bible (Jacob Satanized), and the reader's creative misprision of Milton himself.

Each of these critical books has made a decisive choice. Four of them adapt or oppose Bloom's treatment of intertextuality; all six yield to an extreme intentionalist view. Whether this is derived from Fish directly, or absorbed through an influence that is more diffuse, its effect on critical method is baleful. Milton broods, God-like, over his own text, forbidding and foreknowing. Didactic significance is paramount; multiple meanings are denied. Allusions, far from being models of ambiguity – potentially misreadable, and dangerously allowed – are seen instead as checkpoints, whereby the erring reader adjusts his or her perspective to fit with Milton's own.

For Barbara Lewalski, whose preface declares independence from Fish's views, imitative strategies in *Paradise Lost* are "essentially heuristic". The reader is not so much entangled and humiliated as instructed, through awareness of "multiple genres and genre transformations", to see Milton's purpose in a clearer light. Those who have this awareness will, for instance, take the point that his fallen angels are "masters of several kinds of deliberation, epic, dialogic and epideictic speech, as well as of tragic soliloquy", and that the virtual absence of lyric in the infernal society proves "the imaginative and emotional poverty of the damned". Lewalski is concerned with an ideal reader, whose capacity to learn depends on discrimination, and whose discrimination comes from learning. If anything could turn one into such a person, it is *Paradise Lost* and the Rhetoric of Literary Forms.

The argument stands or falls on its treatment of Satan. Here generic references are in open conflict with the character they describe, and therefore potentially subversive of moral design. In Lewalski's view, Satan is measured according to the heroic standards embodied in classical epic, romance and tragedy, against all of which he is found wanting. The poet's intention is not to debate those genres, or to exalt Satan as hero; it is, rather, to make evil humanly comprehensible and at the same time to convey how far Satan has perverted what in him was good. This approach yields suggestive parallels – Satan's step-by-step incursion into Eden as a romance quest, like Guyon's journey to Acrasia's Bower of Bliss; Satan as Odysseus – but when parallelism threatens to upset the moral scheme, Lewalski interprets it as parody. Conveniently and reductively, disturbing likeness is seen as the ironic confirmation of reassuring difference, by which it is finally subdued.

Similar issues are raised by Milton's relationship with Ovid – seen by Richard DuRocher as "the heroic, at times perilous struggle between poetic fiction and Christian truth" – and with Shakespeare, whose imagination (according to Paul Stevens) was merely "creative", whereas Milton's own was the instrument of God. To a surprising extent also, as Cedric Brown's book on *Comus* reveals, tensions seem to be implied in Milton's reformist adaptation of masque. "For this disciple of Spenser, the way to moral definition is through the delights of fictive play", Brown comments: "No masque ever examined the moral bases of its own rituals more directly." From a historical, intentionalist – or, in the case of Cedric Brown, a political – point of view, the arguments are all persuasive. But what of the ambiguous workings of allusion itself? DuRocher's ingenious, elegantly argued book allows for one moment of leeway in its didactic scheme, when it talks of Ovidian allusion giving Milton "room to manoeuvre between priestly interpretation and poetic narrative". Otherwise, the fables are subordinate to higher truth. Milton's treatment of Eve, for instance, is an example of "moral imagination supplanting earlier myth", while Satan is "the hero of an epic tradition that the poem ultimately disavows".

Paul Stevens, adopting a similar strategy, divides *Paradise Lost* in two: Satan, whose vision is deluded (as the pointed Shakespearean echoes imply) is the hero of one epic; Adam/Christ of the other. "Fantastic" gives way to "icastic" imagination, as Satan's version of events disintegrates. Homeric and Virgilian allusions, meanwhile, are a vital source of tension. Read typologically, they assert a continuity between pagan and Christian values;

read literally, they challenge the Christian structure. The reader can either become ensnared in the subtext or choose to subjugate words to the Word.

Milton, *Poet of Duality*, takes intentionalism to its limit. According to R. A. Shoaf, Milton's habit of punning, like his allusions, offers a challenge to faith and unitary meaning, for "should he fail to be sufficiently severe, [the poet] will produce only monsters of confusion". He and the reader must "divide to join, distinguish to unite"; they must separate the meanings within puns, despite the pleasure of their conjunction. Similarly, with allusion, they must be ever "on guard against confusing like and unlike", for confusion is the devil's work. Lip-service must be paid in this context to the prevailing language of deconstruction: Satan, who tried to "impair" God, only to wind up "impairing" (unpairing himself from) God, commits a rhyme (an act of confusion) on the word (-pair) that inscribes his own error. He rhymes on what he cannot do, repair.

But the message is straightforward enough: "More than any other text I know . . . *Paradise Lost* is intended", Shoaf explains "To deconstruct . . . would necessarily be to transgress."

For Milton, though, allusion is transgression. Whether one is interpreting classical and biblical reference, or punning, or similes, or self-echo, it is evasive (even repressive) to convert ambiguity into irony. When a likeness is suggested, by any of these modes, it creates in the reader a pleasurable response to human values that cannot later be retracted. Milton may choose (as Waldock long ago pointed out) to place a marker outside the passage involved – "Thus they relate, erring" – but the "damage" has already been done. The presence of the marker has in fact a tendency to emphasize (antagonize) and so heighten the emotion previously felt, just as, within a simile, one's interest in stated likeness may be intensified by contrast that is implied.

## Modishness rejected

### David Nokes

DAVID HOPKINS  
John Dryden  
216pp. Cambridge University Press. £25 (paperback, £7.50).  
052130914X

David Hopkins's book begins with a triumphant chorus. Ingeniously synthesizing the voices of Johnson and Coleridge, Tennyson and Gerard Manley Hopkins, he produces a blast of praise that would do justice to the billboard hyperboles of theatre managers. Why, he asks, in the din of such resounding acclamations, is Dryden's poetry so neglected? The fault, he believes, lies with those late Victorians who insisted on seeing Dryden as either the spokesman for an age of prose and reason, or as a purveyor of formulaic plays to a decadent Restoration theatre. David Hopkins aims to return to "the older spirit of enthusiasm but discriminating generosity towards Dryden".

That discrimination is most evident in the priorities he assigns to the various arenas of Dryden's output. Unfortunately, he notes, Dryden's modern reputation tends to depend on a handful of satires; but Hopkins suggests that Dryden's real genius lay elsewhere, in his translation of Virgil and Juvenal, Chaucer and Boccaccio. He has little time for the plays, and regrets that Dryden "squandered so much of his talent trying to please the tastes of a public whom he increasingly despised as shallow and fickle". Dryden's apparent rejection of the theatre in 1680 in favour of religious and philosophical verse is presented as a crucial turning-point by Hopkins. He cites these lines from Dryden's *Eleus* to Anne Killigrew:

How far have we  
Prophan'd thy Heavenly gift of Poesy?  
Made prostitute and profligate the Muse . . .

This is offered as a straightforward piece of autobiography, as Hopkins declares that "of all English poets, Dryden best deserves the title of 'late developer'". According to this view, nothing that Dryden wrote before 1682 if of more than intermittent interest. However, Hopkins is generous in his prizes of Dryden's

Everywhere in *Paradise Lost* there are modes of this kind: in which sameness and difference coexist, create indeterminacy, allow for implications which conflict with a didactic reading. The purpose of dramatic and verbal anticipation, for instance, may very well be to sharpen distinctions between fallen and unfallen perspectives; but its effect, very frequently, is to cause them to dissolve. Multiple cross-references, linking heavenly activities with those in Hell, may be intended as ironic parallels, but what one responds to is the human feelings which opposites share. Parody, when complicated by these human feelings, becomes an imaginative conflation which undoes moral extremes.

It is the cumulative pressure of these indeterminate modes that allows a Romantic reading of *Paradise Lost* to emerge. And it emerged, what is more, long before the Romantics started reading. Dustin Griffin's cautious book, though it makes a helpful scholarly contribution, fails to bring out how adventurously "Romantic" the eighteenth century's use of Milton could be. It fails, also, to stress the continuity between Milton's habits of allusion and those of the writers who came after him. Unless one sees this continuity, one tends either to dismiss Romantic interpretation as perverse, or to overstress (and overvalue) the "transumptive" qualities which are present at its Satanic extreme. The image of a Milton dramatically divided against himself – in fetters when writing of angels and Heaven, at liberty when of devils and Hell – has tended to obscure the more subtle and pervasive ways in which "Romantic" readings are implied in the ambiguous patterning of his language. The "subtext" of *Paradise Lost* offers a valuation of the fallen world which is integral to its meaning. If, as all these writers claim, Milton designs this subtext so that we may "see and know, and yet abstain", the reader, like Adam and Eve, is fortunately free to fail.

religious poetry. Many critics are at least troubled by Dryden's convenient shift from a forceful defence of Anglicanism in *Religio Laici* (1682) to an equally forceful defence of Catholicism in *The Hind and the Panther* (1687). But Hopkins is unconcerned by any questions of opportunism here, preferring to treat the poems as a pair which together "stress the common core of Christian belief".

There is a curiously formulaic quality to both the enthusiasm and the discrimination in this book, which yields faint echoes of old Leavisite certainties in its confident separation of good from bad. Poems, or passages from poems, are confidently pronounced "good" or "bad" according to certain clear criteria. As Hopkins renders it, the central test is whether they "convey truth about life". The factors which make for bad poetry are correspondingly easy to specify. Many of them are to be found, for example, in Dryden's satiric poetry of the 1660s and 70s which, Hopkins writes, "was seriously vitiated by its preoccupations with ephemeral concerns". It was not until he had rejected "the lure of modishness" that his work achieved true greatness. The literary characteristics of this "lure" are revealed in some heavily loaded passages of close analysis as "rhetorical affluence . . . clichéd diction . . . melodramatic posturing". On the other hand, when in his translation of Virgil's *Georgics*, Dryden's poetry depicts the solid joys of rural life, Hopkins is full of praise. "The vigorous rooting of the swine, the oiliness of the olives, and the cows, lowing to have their distended udders relieved as much as to bestow their milk on the farmer, are all evoked with economy and affectionate precision", he notes.

As an introduction to Dryden's poetry, this book has at least the virtues of energy and clarity. Hopkins's approach is uncluttered with scholarly or historical details, and his enthusiasm is refreshing. However, his attempt to rescue Dryden from the social and political preoccupations of the reign of Charles II, and to present him instead as a serene moral poet of the 1680s and 90s seems unhappily perverse. There is a vitality and a seriousness to Dryden's satires which Hopkins seriously undervalues. Or, as Dryden put it, "there's a sweetness in good verse, which tickles even while it hurts."







## Without deference

### Hanif Kureishi

**JOHN STREET**  
Rebel Rock: The politics of popular music  
247pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £19.50 (paperback,  
£6.95).  
0631 143440  
**DAVID WIDGERY**  
Beating Time  
128pp. Chatto and Windus. £6.95.  
0701 29859  
**BOB GELDOLF** with **PAUL VALLEY**  
Is That It?  
352pp. Sidgwick and Jackson. £10.95.  
0283 993626

One of the virtues of John Street's book *Rebel Rock*, in which otherwise the proportion of sense to words is very low, is that it gives us an idea of the effect of popular music and specifically rock and roll around the world. "When I hear jazz," said Khrushchev, "it's as if I had gas on the stomach." "Did Maxim Gorky grove to the stent music of the black oppressed? No; for him: 'A wild horn wails piercingly, calling to mind the cries of a raving camel.'" Chernenko agreed with Gorky and Khrushchev and in a speech to the party in 1983 he insisted that socialist culture shouldn't dwell on "the seamy side of things". As a result, rock groups were disbanded, discs were closed and folk songs, it was decreed, should now be treated respectfully. Yet at Elton John's first Moscow concert, where most of the ticket-holders were people with bureaucratic connections, there was a near-riot as the children of Party members attempted to storm the stage.

On the other hand, when the Argentinian dictatorship organized a musical festival to encourage support for the Malvinas/Falklands war, they found the event being turned into a peace rally by the musicians and the audience. So while rock may not contain a direct political challenge – and indeed its lyrics are usually banal and reactionary – its effect may be to harry the authorities because of its ability to arouse emotions while at the same time lacking in social consciousness. Rock is rude and sensual, without deference; it exalts hedonism and rebellion. Thus a record like the Rolling Stones' "Street Fighting Man", which has the pessimistic lyric "What can a poor boy do / Except sing for a rock 'n' roll band", can become an emblem for late 1960s political activists.

Politicians who wish that they were as popular and influential among the young as rock stars are, have taken to using them. John McGovern had The Grateful Dead playing to support him during his 1972 Presidential Campaign; after one meeting Jimmy Carter claimed that Bob Dylan was his friend; and Reagan quotes Bruce Springsteen with the fervour of Mrs Thatcher quoting St Francis of Assisi. Generally, when rock stars have become involved in politics it is issues they are attached

to, rather than parties. Bob Geldof, for instance, has always ensured that his work would not be associated with any political party.

The Socialist Workers Party, whose members are usually the first to fling themselves at police lines during demonstrations, have a revolutionary strategy which inclines them to associate themselves with the most visible issues of the day, whether they be anti-apartheid, abortion, CND, or the miners. They started the Anti-Nazi League and Rock Against Racism in 1976 after the white working-class blues guitarist Eric Clapton, whose musical mentors were poor blacks, had made speeches during concerts in support of Enoch Powell and repatriation for blacks. At this time, when the National Front was especially strong, David Bowie also spoke of his sympathy with fascism. The idea of RAR was to beat up fascists where they considered it appropriate and to change attitudes within popular culture by using rock and roll. The slogan was "Black and White Unite and Fight".

David Widgery's book *Beating Time* chronicles the rise of RAR; it celebrates the enthusiasm of the young people involved, their lives otherwise rendered meaningless by unemployment; and it tells of the SWP's attempt to build a fresh idea of socialism unrelated to the white, male, Brylcreemed, whipper-owning view Widgery and his comrades imagined predominated among the young. A number of concerts were held, using white, black and two-tone bands, including The Clash, Steel Pulse

and The Specials. Neil Kinnock approved, saying: "As far as I'm concerned, the ANL performs a very important function for the Labour Party." Although the NF organizer Martin Webster agreed that the NF had been obstructed by losing the propaganda war against the ANL and RAR, Widgery gives us no idea why the organization suddenly folded. It seems likely, though, that the SWP grew tired of race and moved on to another more popular issue with a higher profile and better recruiting prospects.

Widgery says that Bob Geldof's achievement with Band Aid was often "smug and establishment". But of course there is nothing conformist or inhibited about Geldof himself and the back of his autobiography *Is That It?* carries a kind of cigarette-packet warning telling us that some readers "may find parts of this book offensive". This is clearly intended as encouragement, though encouragement is unnecessary since, helped by Paul Valley, Geldof has produced the most interesting rock and roll autobiography that I have read as well as the best written – or dictated, as is the fashion these days.

It is a funny, picaresque tale of a wild clever kid making his headlong way through British and Irish society, from almost the bottom to the top. Geldof had a strict Catholic upbringing and was often beaten by his teachers and his father. His adolescence was feckless, working in an abattoir, freaking out on drugs, and writing for rock papers in Vancouver. Rock music gave his life sense and direction, and his

heroes, Jagger, Lennon, Townshend, helped badly educated young working-class people to see it was possible to break away from the dreary patterns expected of them. For months he toured the United States in a rock and roll band, although his band, The Boomtown Rats, was never very successful in America. But after several hits in Britain, he received everything he wanted, which was "to get rich, get famous and get laid". By the time Geldof saw Michael Buerk's BBC film of children starving in Ethiopia and conceived the idea for Band Aid, his fifteen minutes of fame as a rock star had come and gone.

Soon he was admired for other reasons, travelling in Africa, organizing Live Aid and meeting everyone: the description of the growth of his genuine friendship with Prince Charles is fascinating; he tried to kiss Mother Theresa, though she only lens lepers kiss her; he feels sorry for Teddy Kennedy, imprisoned by the past; and he finds, to Mitterrand's asperation, that the French President has the same taste in furniture as Nancy Reagan. He seems to be afraid of no one and to know that there is nothing to be gained by sycophancy. Meeting Mrs Thatcher at a televised awards ceremony he confronted her over a plan to spend ten million pounds disposing of EEC butter. She gave "her death-ray glare" and said: "Mr Geldof, they can't eat butter." Geldof replied: "They can eat butter oil," and persisted. Later Thatcher tried to charm him but she refused to waive the VAT on the Band Aid record. He prefers Mother Theresa.

Alan V. Hewat

**IRA GITLER**  
*Swing to Bop: An oral history of the transition in jazz in the 1940s*  
331pp. Oxford University Press. £17.50.  
019 5036646

To compile *Swing to Bop*, this thoroughly engaging oral history of the Bebop Era, Ira Gitler interviewed some seventy-five jazzmen (and two women) and dipped lightly into a few secondary sources such as François Postif's 1959 *Jazz Hot* conversation with Lester Young. He then cut and assembled his materials to construct a roughly chronological narrative of the turbulent period when jazz's most gifted younger players broke away from the dwindling inspiration of the big swing bands to assert themselves through a new style.

Bebop, with its altered harmonies and extended chords, its liberated rhythmic pulse and often inscrutable phrasing, felt harshly on the sensibilities of the older jazz musicians and their adherents, and the beboppers themselves manifested a cocky self-absorption; their im-

pact within the hitherto largely homogeneous jazz community was divisive. Factions were formed. Members of the Old Guard (Eddie Condon, Tommy Dorsey) stated their distaste for the "weird noise". (Louis Armstrong called it "Malice Music".) Critics either defended or reviled it with highfalutin invective; for most fans in those times, there was no middle ground.

But that all took place in the 1940s, and one of the benign effects of reading *Swing to Bop* is to remind us of the healing effect of nostalgia. The mood of the book is one of calm retrospection, in which only rarely is past injustice remembered – as when, for example, saxophonist Billy Mitchell recalls a racist incident which caused him to leave Woody Herman's band. Even then, the pain has faded; Mitchell ends the anecdote wryly, saying, "Life is funny, man." Similar stories recall life on the road, its perils and discomfort; problems with drugs and alcohol and with eccentric colleagues (Dodo Marmarosa, Serge Chaloff); conflicts with the Union, with bandleaders, with uncaring audiences.

*Swing to Bop* is primarily a book for fans. The interviewees include such familiar figures

as Mary Lou Williams, Howard McGhee and Budd Johnson, as well as some who are obscure or half-remembered: Biddy Beale, Allen Tinney. And if their recollections never explain exactly what bebop is, that is understandable; no one else has ever been able to define jazz either. Instead, what they communicate is the excitement of being part of the development of that music at the time. In their stories they acknowledge the stylists who influenced them (Armstrong, Young, Charlie Christian, Art Tatum); they salute the older musicians who supported them (Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins); they summon up forgotten talents (Freddie Webster, Vic Coulson); they pay tribute to the prematurely dead (Sonny Berman, Stan Hasselgard); and, throughout, they honour Charlie "Bird" Parker.

For Bird was one of the two jazzmen (Armstrong was the other) whose playing affected virtually every western non-classical musician of his time and afterwards, who changed forever the sound of popular music. Dead more than thirty years, to the narrators of this book he still reigns. Their account of him often takes on a hagiographical tone (Barney Kessel: "once he carried my amplifier..."), or approaches the apocryphal (Earl Coleman describes Bird anointing a very young John Coltrane with his approval), but they are unanimous in their appreciation of his gifts and his continuing influence. Like bebop itself, this book belongs most of all to Parker, and while the picture it creates of him is something less than whole, with many facets of his disquieting and distressing personality either avoided or glossed over, it is a welcome and important addition to the chronicle of his life and his art, and to the literature of jazz.

*The American 45 and 78 RPM Record Disc Guide, 1940-1959*, compiled by William R. Daniels (156pp. Westport CT: Greenwood, distributed in the UK by Westport Publications, 3 Henrietta Street, London WC2E 8LU, 0313 242321) will enable readers to dig up specific month of record-release for single issues of almost 2,500 record companies, a total of 93,000 discs. As primary sources for research the author used the magazines *Billboard*, *The Cash Box* and *One Stop*. The book lists record companies in alphabetical order; subsidiary and related companies are also listed with cross-references to the parent company. Daniels remarks ruefully that his listing "is based upon the assumption that record companies were faithful in promptly sending out copies of their releases to magazines".

## Among the journals

### Cultural reviews

**La Revue des Revues**  
No 1, March 1986  
50 francs. Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 54 Boulevard Raspail, 75006 Paris.

Since the presence and influence of the review at its most culturally ambitious has in recent decades seemed more noticeable in France than in Britain, it is appropriate that the first one exclusively devoted to the cultivation and study of this very phenomenon should appear there. It emanates from a group called "Ent'revues", which is made up of individuals interested in "the life of reviews" from various angles – not only as editors, contributors, and scholars, but also as publishers, booksellers and librarians, roles which in France have traditionally included a directly creative intellectual dimension in a way perhaps uncommon among their counterparts in Britain. The group's declared aim is to create "a space for information, exchange and reflection"; apart from publishing *La Revue des Revues* and organizing various cultural events in France, it hopes to establish an international network of contacts among those interested, from whatever point of view, in the history and current situation of the genre.

This first number certainly attests to the existence of a vigorous interest in the subject within France. This is most strikingly illustrated by the report of a working-party on "les revues culturelles" set up at the end of 1984 by the Ministry of Culture, which presents some very specific proposals about fiscal, postal and subsidy arrangements that would help this always economically fragile genre to prosper. The rubrics under which the other articles are organized also suggest the bustling diversity of the field: there are brief portraits of new reviews, reports on international conferences, discussions of bibliographical guides and other research tools, and so on. Each issue will also have a substantial survey article devoted to the range of reviews active in various cultural sub-fields: the first of these treats reviews which deal with the theatre, and includes illustrated profiles of no fewer than eleven publications which specialize in this way in France. Even the shorter items profit from imaginative layout, and the standard of design and production is quite outstanding, splendidly disdaining that dingy austerity that some academic or coterie reviews parade as a sign of their seriousness.

This gathering of information will clearly be useful for researchers with special practical needs, but if *La Revue des Revues* is itself to be a "review" it will have to lay a claim upon the reader's attention which is different in kind from that made by a mere bulletin of information or newsletter. After all, what a review primarily offers its readers is a certain quality of writing or level of reflection: it is a question of "voice" rather than of information.

Certainly, the most substantial article in this opening issue could hold its own among representatives of the tradition of the thoughtful, provocative cultural essay. Jean-Marie Domenéche's "Entre le prophétique et le ciblé" traces the classic pattern whereby a group of young intellectuals, exasperated by what they experience as the impermeable rigidity of a literary "establishment", create for themselves a medium through which to promote the kinds of innovation for which they think they have identified a need. But as the enterprise prospers, the innovations harden into dogma; the editorial committee ages, falls out, disperses; the review either folds or becomes the necessary "food" upon which the aggressive impulse of the next generation feeds.

Domenéche also reflects interestingly, and in part autobiographically (he was for twenty years the editor of the radical Catholic review *Esprit*), on the inevitable problems of direction and leadership with such reviews, pulled between the extremes of autocratic dogmatism and democratic eclecticism. He contrasts the role of the editor during the first few decades of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, where he was the dominating spirit but not formally the director, with Sartre's role in *Les Temps Modernes*, where he was officially the editor but soon ceased to be the moving spirit; which, suggests Domenéche, is one of the reasons why, after a brief period of glory, the review lost much of its impact. (This view of Sartre's role at *Les Temps Modernes*, at

least in the crucial decade after 1945, is not altogether supported by the detailed research deployed in the study recently published by Anna Boschetti, *Sartre et "Les Temps Modernes"* [Les Editions de Minuit, 1985].) The extraordinary cultural centrality and influence of the *Nouvelle Revue Française* between the wars continues to fascinate students of the genre and to provide a standard of success for would-be imitators which various social and intellectual changes may have rendered unmatchable. Perhaps no literary review has ever achieved this dominant position in twentieth-century Britain: by comparison, *Elliott's Criterion* or Connolly's *Horizon* seem sectarian and marginal in one way just as Leavis's *Scrutiny* does in another. If *La Revue des Revues* lives up to its international aspirations, we may perhaps hope to find some interesting reflections on national variations of this kind in future numbers.

Stefan Collini

### Literary criticism

**Style**  
Volume 19, No 1  
\$17 per year. Department of English,  
Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois  
60115/2863.

*Style* is a quarterly which devotes each issue to a different topic within the broad field of stylistics, and in the past year we have had issues on poetics, recent literary theory, psychopoetics, and (the present issue) the modern novel. The individual essays naturally vary in tone and quality, but the general question remains whether the approach adds anything new, merely rephrases what we already knew in a more scientific vocabulary, or positively distorts.

The answer seems to be that here, as with other kinds of critical endeavour, it all depends on the critic, not the method. Gerard Genette illuminates Proust, and Mieke Bal the Bible, through the depth and passion of their response, which have led them to seek ways of articulating that response so as to do it justice. On the other hand Miriam Brody's analysis of *Gaudy Night*, which takes up twenty-five pages of the current issue of *Style* and makes use of tables and diagrams, does not persuade me that Dorothy Sayers has written a self-referential novel. Nor does Beverly Olson Flanagan tell me anything I did not already know when she concludes an essay in an earlier issue by saying that to understand a poem by Yeats or Auden we need to examine not the specific public objects to which the poem refers but the way the language works and the cultural tradition within which the poet is writing.

Though some of the essays in *Style* are rebarbative, the tone on the whole is commonsensical and unpretentious. What Lynne Waldehand says in a review of a book by Susan Suleiman could apply to her own work and to that of most of her fellow-contributors:

Her prose is clear; her reliance on charts and diagrams is balanced by prose explanations for those impatient with the use of such tools; her definitions are precise; her scope is broad although her focus is specific; Whether one cares about the *roman à thèse* or not, this book will be of value in its revelations about the workings of narrative, the limits of realism, and the act of reading.

In the end, one feels about journals like *Style* that they are, like their more traditional counterparts, a good thing to have around, a testimony to the continuing interest intelligent people have in literature, and, though strictly for fellow-professionals, they do, perhaps, provide the undergrowth which gives shelter to those saplings which will in time grow into great trees.

Gabriel Josipovici

### Printing

**Matrix: A review for printers and bibliophiles**  
No 5; December 1985

*Matrix* is an annual review primarily concerned with printing. The first issue appeared in December 1981, and consisted of 350 copies of seventy-two pages, selling at £10. *Matrix* 5 appeared in December 1985 and consisted of 715 copies of over 200 pages, selling at £35, so it can be said to have made a niche for itself. Indeed, such is the continuing demand that

*Matrix* 1 is now being reprinted, with an index of the first five issues.

Part of the secret of *Matrix*'s success can be discovered in an article in the first issue. "My first day at the Press" by Richard Kennedy, which begins, "Leonard Woolf was a passionate printer. The passion for print is not of the kind that tears a person to tatters, it is pent up, like pushing a door open slowly." The "passion for print" is a genuine and serious affliction which draws people into printing from totally different occupations: Baskerville for example, from japaanology. John Randle, who edits and prints *Matrix* from the Whittington Press in Gloucestershire, had

an obsession with printing which started at the Marlborough College Press when I was fifteen . . . I was captivated by the smell of printing ink, the piles of hand-made paper, the old wooden cases full of Caslon type, the magnificent Albion presses, and not least the dedication of the printers who ran the press with almost no outside interference.

*Matrix* is interested in anything to do with fine printing in the twentieth century, which turns out to be an inexhaustible source. In *Matrix* 5 (about one inch thick in soft covers, weighing only slightly less than the bound volume of *Fleurbaey* 5, published in 1926) we start with an article by the late Hans Schmoller about decorated papers made by three Italian ladies, all now dead, illustrated with black-and-white halftones and no less than six large swatches of the actual coloured papers themselves, most beautiful and for long unobtainable. Then comes "The Origin and Growth of the Stanley Morison Room, Cambridge University Library" by David McKitterick, its curator; "The Curwen Press Collection in the Cambridge University Library" by John Dreyfus, illustrated with swatches of Curwen Press decorated papers, sixteen pages of reproductions of notable colour printing by the firm and eight pages of its types and borders, proofed from the original metal by Ian Mortimer and printed off-set at the Senecio Press, followed by a short article on Harold Curwen by Noel Carrington; and twenty-one more articles, all of interest and illustrated with inserts, insets, halftones, wood engravings, and so on. I particularly enjoyed a fifteen-page article, "T. B. Lawrence and the printing of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*", by J. M. Wilson, Lawrence's authorized biographer, illustrated with the set of initials designed for the book by Edward Wadsworth.

The design of *Matrix* is sensible, and has not changed since the first issue. Since the contents are varied not only in subject but in the diversity of illustrations and typographical specimens included, a simple typographic formula was devised to produce a traditional book page, set in Monotype Caslon on Somerville cream laid cartridge, which is just right as a foil to the many stick-downs, fold-outs and other exotica. Altogether, *Matrix* is a very welcome addition to the literature of printing.

Ruairi McLean

Part newsletter, part scholarly journal, the elegantly produced *Library Chronicle of the University of Texas at Austin* (quarterly: \$25 for four issues) presents information on available materials in the special collections at the university, publishes articles based on these materials, and records new acquisitions, exhibitions and other events related to the collections. New Series Number 34, published earlier this year, is mainly devoted to D.H. Lawrence, interest in whom, according to Warren Roberts ("D.H. Lawrence at Texas: A Memoir"), "provided the occasion for the first attempt to bring the archive of a twentieth-century writer to Texas". Leonora Woodman writes on Lawrence's letters to the mystic and artist Frederick Carter; Thomas Zigar contributes a note on Lawrence the painter – there are twenty-three "artworks" by him in the Iconography Collection of the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at Texas of which Kathleen Gee provides a checklist in this number; Bruce Steele describes the publication history of Lawrence's *Phoenix*, and his impact on Henry Miller is discussed by David Stephen Calonne.

The Trevor Reese Memorial Prize for 1986 has been awarded to C. A. Bayly for his *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian society in the age of British expansion, 1770-1870*, published by Cambridge University Press and reviewed in the *TLS*, July 1, 1983. This prize of £500 is awarded for the book of imperial history judged best of those published in preceding two-year periods. The 1988 award will be for a book published in 1985-6; publishers or authors interested should submit one copy to the Director's Secretary, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, 27 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DS.

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## The American way

### Brian Case

**JOHN FORDHAM**  
Let's Join Hands and Contact the Living:  
Ronnie Scott and his Club  
193pp. Elm Tree. £6.95.  
0241 11741

If Ronnie Scott's autobiography with Mike Hennessey, *Some Of My Best Friends Are Blues*, presents the public face of the celebrated club-owner and tenor saxophonist, John Fordham's study convincingly captures the private man. Few would have suspected that the wisecracking, polished host of thousands of jazz performances was both romantic and depressive, and it is greatly to the biographer's credit that he has been able to elicit such information from a man who has raised reticence to the status of an art-form. Of course, the clues were there. Usually associated with up-tempo bebop, Scott is also a master of both ballads and blues, fair indications of emotional depths.

Born into an East End Jewish family in which the conflicting tugs of art and business

were typically present, Scott's upbringing was further complicated by a divorced father – a glamorous figure who played the saxophone in dance bands. If a musical career seemed inevitable, the choice of the jazz field, and in particular, the new revolutionary bebop, was not. The first generation of British modernists came by their craft the hard way, puzzling over the handful of 78 rpm records and acetates that crossed the Atlantic, seeking out the London-based jazz-loving GIs, and finally signing on with dance bands on the liners – Gerald's Navy – bound for New York to hear the new music live. In the face of American mastery, many British musicians became discouraged and most developed an inferiority complex. Bebop was not the expression of anything organic in the British culture, as it was in that of the African-American.

Scott, the most fluent performer in the new harmonic language, became the rallying point for British beboppers. With the exception of his big band, all his bands were artistically and commercially successful, despite the national antipathy towards innovation. His visits to New York's 52nd Street – Swing Street – were the beginning of the dream that, one day, he

would have a club and present the legendary American musicians to the British public. Credit for establishing one of the world's great jazz clubs is properly shared between Ronnie Scott and his business partner, Pete King. Its survival over twenty-seven years is a miracle. The all-devouring rise of British pop music and the complete lack of Arts Council support have not led to prosperity. Despite a reputation for safe, mainstream-modern bookings, the club can point to adventurous departures like the residencies of avant-gardists Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor and Archie Shepp, and last year's triple bill of Cuban bands. In a quarter-century that has seen the rise and fall of every other jazz venue in London – and the complete purge of New York's 52nd Street – it is clear that Scott and King are not in the business to make money. Fordham is particularly good on the eccentricities of the American performers at the club; and acute in setting the musical-historical context. Scott's pioneering modernism has resulted in world-class status for British jazz musicians. Sonny Rollins's classic album *Saxophone Colossus* was recorded for Prestige and Jick Blue Note – the only error in a thoroughly researched and illuminating book.